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JOURNAL OF
KATHERINE MANSFIELD

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O'Hara, C.E
An intro. to
Criminalistics

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JOURNAL
OF
KATHERINE MANSFIELD

Edited by

J. Middleton Murry

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PREFACE

In this edition of Katherine Mansfield's *Journal* passages have been restored which for various reasons were suppressed in the original edition of 1927. Other passages have been incorporated which, though actually published in the *Scrapbook* in 1939, really belong to the *Journal* and would have been included in it, if they had been discovered in time. Further, innumerable minor corrections have been made as the result of a more careful study of manuscripts which are often almost illegible.

The diligence of Katherine Mansfield's biographers, Miss Ruth Mantz (1933) and Mr. Antony Alpers (1954) has unearthed a good deal of information concerning her life previous to 1912 which was unknown to me; and the autobiography in novel form of the late Mr. William Orton, *The Last Romantic* (1937) contains some passages from a journal kept by Katherine Mansfield in 1911, which are obviously authentic, and are included in this edition. Although many parts of Katherine Mansfield's tumultuous existence from 1906 to 1912 remain obscure, enough has emerged to explain her determination to destroy the record of those experiences, and the fact that only a few scattered pages have survived from 'the huge complaining diaries' of which she subsequently spoke (February 16, 1916). There is no doubt whatever that the once ardent disciple of the doctrine of living dangerously came eventually to regard much of her eagerly sought experience in 'the inexplicable past' as 'waste—destruction too', or that the youthful believer in the transience of love became convinced of love's eternity.

The two biographies have superseded the biographical note in the original edition of the *Journal*. It is therefore omitted. But the passage describing the materials of which the Journal is composed still holds good, and follows in substance below.

At various times in her life from 1912 onwards Katherine Mans-

field entertained the plan of writing for publication 'a kind of *minute notebook*' (see under January 22, 1916). Three separate attempts to carry the plan into execution can be traced in her manuscripts, and once, in 1920, she got so far as to instruct me to make arrangements with a publisher. The notes for this notebook would have been rewritten from entries in her journals. Sometimes, the original journal entry and the rewritten note exist side by side. In these cases (as in May 1919 and elsewhere) I have printed them both.

But these notes, polished for publication during her lifetime, are only a fraction of the material of which the *Journal* is composed. This is of various kinds: comments, confessions, and unposted letters, which she had the habit of writing in the same exercise books as those in which she wrote her stories; fragmentary diaries which she preserved and sometimes re-read again and again (see, for instance, August 19, 1920); brief and often difficult, notes for stories; marginal comments in the books she read. She was incessantly ruthless with her own past, and I have little doubt that what has survived is, almost wholly, that which, for one reason and another, she wished to survive. But this does not apply to the fragments from 1904 to 1912. They (with the exception of the journal of her up-country expedition in the North Island of New Zealand, which she probably retained for reference) appear to have escaped destruction by pure accident. Since they have been used as material by her biographers, it seemed necessary to include them in what claims to be a definitive edition of her *Journal*.

The frontispiece is the photograph of Katherine Mansfield's beloved grandmother, which she describes in her journal for January 21, 1922.

JOURNAL 1904

Katherine Mansfield left New Zealand in January 1903 *to enter Queen's College, Harley Street, London. She was fourteen. A year before, she had met in Wellington a gifted young 'cellist, Arnold Trowell, who was a native of the city. She had made friends with him, conceived a girlish passion for him, and began to learn the 'cello herself. He is the Caesar of some of the following entries. He and his brother, Garnet Trowell, a young violinist, left New Zealand some six months after Katherine to study at the Brussels conservatoire.*

The following entry, written during Katherine's first Christmas vacation from Queen's College, is probably addressed to Caesar.

1904

January 1 It is twelve o'clock. All the bells in the village churches are pealing. Another year has come. Now, at the entrance of this New Year, my dearest, I propose to begin my book. It will not be at all regal or dramatic, but just all that I have done. You who are so far away know so little of what happens to me, and it is so selfish of me not to tell you more. I have just returned from a midnight service. It was very, very beautiful and solemn. The air outside was cold and bracing, and the Night was a beautiful thing. Over all the woods and meadows Nature had tenderly flung a veil to protect from the frost, but the trees stood out, dark and beautiful against the clear starry sky. The church looked truly very fit for God's house to-night. It looked so strong, so hospitable, so invincible. It was only during the silent prayer that I made up my mind to write this. I mean this year to try and be a different person, and I wait at the end of this year to see how I have kept all the vows that I have made to-night. So much happens in a year. One may mean so well and do so little.

I am writing this by the light of a tiny peep of gas, and I have only got on a dressing gown. So decolleté. I am so tired I think I must go to bed. To-morrow is the first of January. What a

wonderful and what a lovely world this is! I thank God to-night that I *am*.

April 1 Today the weather has been very dull and gray. I woke this morning at four and since then I have heard nothing save the sounds of traffic, and feel nothing except a great longing to be back in the country, among the woods and gardens and the meadows and the chorus of the Spring orchestra. All day during my work, I have found myself dreaming of the woods, and the little secret nooks that have been mine, and mine only, for many years. A girl passed under my window this morning, selling primroses. I bought great bunches of them, and untied their tight chains, and let them stretch their little poor tired clamped selves in a sky-blue dish that had been filled with primroses every year. But they were not like country primroses. As I bent over them, their weary, pale faces looked into mine with the same depth of wondering, strange, fearful perplexities that I have sometimes seen on the face of a little child. It was as though Spring had entered my room, but with her wings broken and soiled and her song quiet—very quiet.

This evening I have sat in my chair with my reading lamp turned low, and given myself up to thoughts of the years that have passed. Like a strain of minor music they have surged across my heart, and the memory of them, sweet and fragrant as the perfume of my flowers, has sent a strange thrill of comfort through my tired brain.

1906

Die Wege des Lebens

'To be premature is to be perfect.'—*O.W.*

'Greek dress was in its essence inartistic. Nothing should reveal the body but itself.'—*O.W.*

'Genius in a woman is the mystic laurel of Apollo springing from the soft breast of Daphne. It hastens the growing, and sometimes breaks the heart from which it springs.'—*M.C.*

'To acknowledge the presence of fear is to give birth to failure.'—*K.M.*

'Me marier et avoir des enfants! Mais quelle blanchisseuse—je veux la gloire.'—*Marie Bashkirtseff.*

'A man who speaks effectively through music is compelled to something more difficult than parliamentary eloquence.'—*G.E.*

'Any great achievement in acting or in music grows with the growth. Whenever an artist has been able to say "I came, I saw, I conquered", it has been at the end of patient practice. Genius is at first little more than a great capacity for receiving discipline. Your muscles, your whole frame, must go like a watch, true, true, true, true as a hair.'—*G.E.*

'If any one should importune me to give a reason why I loved him, I feel it could not otherwise be explained than by making answer, "Because it was he, because it was I." '—*Montaigne.*

'The strongest man is he who stands most alone.'—*Henrik Ibsen.*

'Happy people are never brilliant. It implies friction.'—*K.M.*

'It is not, naturally or generally, the happy who are the most anxious for a prolongation of the present life or for a life hereafter; it is those who have never been happy.'—*J.S.M.*

'It is no unnatural part of the idea of a happy life, that life itself is to be laid down, after the best that it can give has been fully enjoyed through a long lapse of time; when all its pleasures, like those of benevolence, are familiar, and *nothing untasted or unknown* is left to stimulate curiosity and keep up the desire of prolonged existence.'—*J.S.M.*

'Push everything as far as it will go.'—*O.W.*

'The old desire everything—the middle-aged believe everything—the young know everything.'—*O.W.*

'To love madly perhaps is not wise, yet should you love madly, it is far wiser than not to love at all.'—*M.M.*

'People who learn only from experience do not allow for intuition.'—*A.H.H.*

'No life is spoiled but one whose growth is arrested.'—*O.W.*

'We are not sent into the world to air our moral prejudices.'—*O.W.*

'If you want to mar a nature, you have merely to reform it.'—*O.W.*

'The only way to get rid of temptation is to yield to it.'—*O.W.*

'Conscience and cowardice are the same thing. Conscience is the trade-mark of the firm. That is all.'—*O.W.*

'To realise one's nature perfectly—that is what each of us is here for.'—*O.W.*

It was decided that Katherine must return to New Zealand at the end of October 1906. *She arrived in Wellington, reluctant and rebellious, on December* 6. *The style of her journal is overwrought and hectic. Deeply influenced by the reading indicated in the preceding, she was enamoured of the idea of experience at all costs, and passionately bent on returning to England. She found a provisional reconciliation of her two purposes in the idea of making herself so impossible to her parents that they would have to send her away. At the same time, she really abandoned her previous intention of becoming a musician, and concentrated more and more upon her writing.*

October 1 I walk along the broad, almost deserted street. It has a meaningless, forsaken, careless look—like a woman who has ceased to believe in her beauty. The splendid rhythm of life is absent. With tired white faces the people pass to and fro—silently, drearily. All colour seems to have lost its keenness. The street is toneless as a great stretch of sand. And now I pass through the narrow iron gate up the little path and through the heavy doors into the church. Silence hung motionless over the church; the shadow of her great wings darkened everything. Through the gloom the figures of the saints showed dimly. The high altar shone mystical—vision-like. Then I noticed there were many people kneeling in the pews, their attitude strangely pathetic—almost old world. A nun came and sat beside me. She raised a passionless, expressionless face—and the rosary shone like a thread of silver through her fingers.

[*November:* on the S.S. *Corinthic*] Swiftly the night came.

Like a great white bird the ship sped onward—onward into the unknown. Through the darkness the stars shone; yet the sky was a garden of golden flowers, heavy with colour. I lay on the deck of the vessel, my hands clasped behind my head, and watching them I felt a curious complex emotion—a swift realisation that they were shining steadily and ever more powerfully into the very soul of my soul. I felt their still light permeating the very depths, and fear and ecstasy held me still—shuddering. There is some fearful magic in their shining, I thought. As the power of the sunlight causes the firelight to become pale and wasted, so is the flame of my life becoming quenched by this star-shining. I saw the flame of my life as a little little candle flickering fearfully and fancifully, and I thought before long it will go out; and then even as I thought I saw there where it had shone darkness remained. Then I was drifting, drifting—where, whence, whither? I was drifting in a great boundless purple sea. I was being tossed to and fro by the power of the waves, and the confused sound of many voices floated to me. A sense of unutterable loneliness pervaded my spirit. I knew this sea was eternal. I was eternal. This crying was eternal.

So, smiling at myself, I sit down to analyse this new influence: this complex emotion. I am never anywhere for long without a like experience. It is not one man or woman that [*illegible*] visions —it is the whole octave of the sex. F.R. is my latest. The first time I saw him I was lying back in my chair, and he walked past. I watched the complete rhythmic movement, the absolute self-confidence, the beauty of his body, and that [*illegible*] which is the everlasting and eternal in youth and creation stirred in me. I heard him speaking: he has a low, full, strangely exciting voice, a habit of mimicking others, a keen sense of humour. His face is clean cut, like the face of a statue, his mouth absolutely Grecian. Also he has seen much and lived much and his hand is perfectly strong and cool. He is certainly tall, and his clothes shape the lines of his figure. When I am with him a preposterous desire seizes me, I want to be badly hurt by him. I should like to be strangled by his firm

hands. He smokes cigarettes frequently and exquisitely fastidiously.

Last night we sat on deck. He taught me picquet. It was intensely hot. He wore a loose silk shirt under his dress coat. He was curiously excitable, almost a little violent at times. There was a suppressed agitation in every look, every movement. He spoke French for the greater part of the time with exquisite fluency and a certain extreme affectation. He has spent years in Paris. The more hearts you have the better, he said, leaning over my hand. I felt his coat sleeve against my bare arm. If one heart is a very primitive affair, I answered, in these days one must possess many. We exchanged a long look and his glance inflamed me like the scent of a gardenia.

Yesterday afternoon a game of cricket was in progress on the deck. He began bowling. I stood and watched. He took a few slow steps and then bowled at the wicket with the most marvellous force. But every time he did it, each ball seemed to be aimed at my heart. I panted for breath. . . .

We deny our minds to the extent we castrate our bodies. I am wondering if that is true and thinking that it most certainly is. Oh, I want to push it as far as it will go. Tomorrow night there is to be a ball. Thank Dieu I know that my dancing is really beautiful. I shall fight for what I want, yet I don't definitely ⟨know⟩ what that is. I want to upset him, stir in him strange depths. He has seen so much, it would be such a conquest. At present he is—I do not know, I think intensely curious and a little baffled. Am I to become eventually une jeune fille entretenue. It points to it. O God, that is better than ⟨being⟩ the daughter of my parents. [*Six indecipherable words.*]

They are worse than I had even expected. They are prying and curious, they are watchful and they discuss only the food. They quarrel between themselves in a hopelessly vulgar fashion. My Father spoke of my returning as damned rot, said look here, he wouldn't have me fooling around in dark corners with fellows. His hands, covered with long sandy hair, are absolutely cruel hands. A physically revolted feeling seizes me. He wants me to sit near. He watches me at meals, eats in the most abjectly, blatantly

vulgar manner that is describable. He is like a constant offence, but I cannot escape from it, and it wraps me in its atmosphere. When I pass him the dishes at table, or a book or get him a cushion, he refrains from thanking me. *She* is constantly suspicious, constantly overbearingly tyrannous. I watch him walking all the deck, his full hideous speckled trousers, his absurdly [*illegible*] cap. He is like a cat sometimes, I think—except that his eyes are not like a cat's eyes, they are so full, so frightfully offensive, when he is astonished or when he eats anything that pleases him, I think they must start from his head. He watches the dishes go round, anxious to see that he shall have a good share. I cannot be alone or in the company of women for a half minute—he is there, eyes fearful, attempting to appear unconcerned, pulling at his long drooping red-grey moustache with his hairy hands. Ugh!

She is completely and [*illegible*] and easily upset. Tells him what he must and must not do—looks constantly uneasy. They are both so absolutely unenthusiastic. They are a constant offence to me. The sight of them causes me to feel utterly changed. I hesitate in my manner—appear constrained. They have no idea of [*illegible*] things. I shall never be able to live at home. I can plainly see that. There would be constant friction. For more than a quarter of an hour they are quite unbearable, and so absolutely my mental inferiors. What is going to happen in the future? I am full of a restless wonder but I have none of that glorious expectancy that I used to have so much. They are draining it out of me.

If Tom Moore was aboard the *Corinthic*, I fancy his Muse would be inspired to sing:

Of in the stilly night
Ere slumbers chains have bound me
My sleep is put to flight
By all the noise around me.

Along the corridor
Strange gurgles, many a sound.

December I have read enough for this afternoon. Now I want to write. Shall I be able, I wonder? Here is the attempt.

I can write nothing at all. I have many ideas, but no grip of my subject. I want to write verses—but they won't come. . . . I cannot get a charming effect anyway. It's hatefully annoying and disheartening. But there is nothing like trying, so I shall make another attempt. I should like to write something just a trifle mysterious—but really very beautiful and original.

The Growing of Wings. Try to make some sort of sketch of the whole. It will be far simpler. So to speak, block it in. For instance, place your characters carefully and completely. She is born in New Zealand. At the death of her father she is sent to London to Miss Pitts who keeps a boarding house for the young girls who wish to study at the various colleges. Here is the opportunity for sketching in say—a pal . . . Constance Foster and Miss Manners. They are taken by Miss Manners to see her nephew, Paul Hardy—author.

Edie, in the following, is E.K.B., an artist who drew pictures of children, and with whom for a time Katherine eagerly collaborated, writing verses for children, which E.K.B. illustrated. At the same time she sought the company of Caesar's father with whom she practised the 'cello. Adelaida is Ida Baker (L.M.).

January (?) There is, I think, Mr. Trowell. Definitely I have decided not to be a musician. It's not my forte. I can plainly see. The fact remains at that—I must be an authoress. Caesar is losing hold of me. Edie is waiting for me. I shall slip into her arms. They are safest. Do you love me?

Oh, this monotonous, terrible rain. The dull, steady, hopeless sound of it. I have drawn the curtains across the windows to shut out the weeping face of the world—the trees swaying softly in their grief and dropping silver tears upon the brown earth—the narrow, sodden, mean, draggled wooden houses, colourless save for the

dull coarse red of the roof—and the long line of grey hills, impassable, spectral-like.

So I have drawn the curtains across my windows, and the light is intensely fascinating. A perpetual twilight broods here. The atmosphere is heavy with morbid charm. Strange, as I sit here, quiet, alone, how each possession of mine—the calendar gleaming whitely on the wall, each picture, each book, my 'cello case, the very furniture—seems to stir into life. The Velasquez Venus moves on her couch ever so slightly; across the face of Manon a strange smile flickers for an instant and is gone, my rocking chair is full of patient resignation, my 'cello case is wrapt in profound thought. Beside me a little bowl of mignonette is piercingly sweet, and a cluster of scarlet geraniums is hot with colour.

Sometimes, through the measured sound of the rain comes the long, hopeless note of a foghorn far out at sea. And then all life seems but a crying out drearily, and a groping to and fro in a foolish, aimless darkness. Sometimes—it seems like miles away—I hear the sound of a door opening and shutting.

And I listen and think and dream until my life seems not *one* life, but a thousand million lives, and my soul is weighed down with the burden of past existence, with the vague, uneasy consciousness of future strivings.

And the grey thoughts fall on my soul like the grey rain upon the world, but I cannot draw the curtain and shut them out.

February I am at the sea—at Island Bay in fact—lying flat on my face on the warm white sand. And before me the sea stretches.

To my right—shrouded in mist, like a fairy land—a dream country, the snow mountains of the South Island; to my left, fold upon fold of splendid golden hills. Two white lighthouses, like great watching birds perched upon them. A huge yellow dog lies by me. He is wet and ruffled, and I have no boots or stockings on—a pink dress—a panama hat—a big parasol. Adelaida, I wish that you were with me.

Where the rocks lie their shadow is thickly violet upon the green blue—you know that peacock shade of water. Blue—with

the blueness of Rossetti; green—with the greenness of William Morris. Oh, what a glorious day this is! I shall stay here until after dark—walking along the beach—the waves foaming over my feet —drinking a great deal of tea—and eating a preposterous amount of bread and apricot jam at a little place called the Cliff House.

Across the blue sea a boat is floating with an orange sail. Now the Maori fishermen are sailing in—their white sail bellying in the wind. On the beach a group of them—with blue jerseys, thick trousers rolled to their knees. The sun shines on their thick crisp hair, and shines on their faces so that their skins are the colour of hot amber. It shines on their bare legs, and firm brown arms. They are drawing in a little boat called *Te Kooti*, the wet rope running through their fingers and falling in a mystic pattern on the foam-blown sand.

When New Zealand is more artificial, she will give birth to an artist who can treat her natural beauties adequately. This sounds paradoxical, but is true.

Reading Notes

'I am that which is: no mortal man dare lift the veil.'

'He is alone of himself; to him alone do all men owe their being.'—*Religion of Beethoven.*

'Realise your youth while you have it. Don't squander the gold of your days listening to the tedious, trying to improve the hopeless failure, or giving away your life to the ignorant, the common, or the vulgar—which are the aims, the false ideals of our age. Live! Live the wonderful life that is in you. Let nothing be lost upon you. Be always reaching for new sensations. . . . Be afraid of nothing.'—*O. W.*

'Ambition is a curse if you are not proof against everything else—unless you are willing to sacrifice yourself to your ambition.' —*A Woman.*[1]

[1] *A Woman* (afterwards *A. W.*) is no doubt K. M.

'All musicians, no matter how insignificant, come to life emasculated of their power to take life seriously. It is not one man or woman but the complete octave of sex that they desire.'—*A. W.*

'You feel helpless under the yoke of creation.'—*A. W.*

'Nature makes such fools of us! What is the use of liking anyone if the washerwoman can do exactly the same thing? Well, this is Nature's trick to ensure population.'—*A. W.*

'To have the courage of your excess—to find the limit of yourself.'—*A. W.*

'Most women turn to salt, looking back.'—*A. W.*

'Big people have always entirely followed their own inclinations. Why should we remember the names of people who do what everyone else does? To break the law with success is to be illustrious.'—*A. W.*

'I do not want to earn a living; I want to live.'—*O. W.*

'You inspect yourself from the heights of an inspiration and rebound in sickening jolts from cathedral pinnacles to the mud of the street.'—*A. W.*

'A woman cannot really understand music till she has the actual experience of those laboriously concealed things which are evidently the foundation of it all.'—*A. W.*

'The translation of an emotion into an act is its death—its logical end. . . . But . . . this way is not the act of unlawful things. It is the curiosity of our own temperament, the deliberate expression of our own tendencies, the welding into an art of act or incident some raw emotion of the blood. For we castrate our minds to the extent by which we deny our bodies.'—*O. W.*

March 30, 1907 Selections from *Dorian Gray.*

'Being natural is simply a pose—and the most irritating pose I know. . . .

'I like persons with no principles better than anything else in the world.'

'The worst of having a romance of any kind is that it leaves one so unromantic.'

'Those who are faithful know only the trivial side of love; it is the faithless who know love's tragedies.'

'All influence is immoral—immoral from the scientific point of view.

'Nothing can cure the soul but the senses—just as nothing can cure the senses but the soul.'

May (?) Oh, do let me write something really good, let me sketch an idea and work it out. Here is silence and peace and splendour—bush and birds. Far away I hear builders at work upon a house—and the moon sends me half crazy. Let it be a poem. Well, here goes. I am red-hot for ideas. More power to your elbow, my dearest Kathie. That is so, and I *shall* do well. Fitful sunshine now. I am glad, it will be a beautiful afternoon. But I pray you, *let* me write.

June 1 *Day's Bay*. And another change. I sit in the small poverty-stricken sitting-room, the *one* and only room which the cottage contains, with the exception of a cabin-like bedroom fitted with bunks, and an outhouse with a bath and wood-cellar, coal-cellar complete. On one hand is the sea, stretching right up to the yard; on the other the bush growing close down almost to my front door.

Sunday Night I am here almost dead with cold, almost dead with tiredness. I cannot sleep, because the end has come with such suddenness that even I who have anticipated it so long and so thoroughly am shocked and overwhelmed. She is tired. Last night I spent in her arms—and to-night I hate her—which, being interpreted, means that I adore her: that I cannot lie in my bed and not feel the magic of her body: which means that sex seems as nothing to me. I feel more powerfully all those so-termed sexual impulses with her than I have with any man. She enthrals, enslaves me—and her personal self—her body absolute—is my worship. I feel that to lie with my head on her breast is to feel what life can hold. All my troubles, my wretched fears, are swept away. Gone

are all the recollections of Caesar and Adonis; gone the terrible banality of my life. Nothing remains except the shelter of her arms.

And of course, a week ago, I could have borne all this, because I had never known what it truly was to love and be loved—to adore passionately. But now I feel that if she is denied me, I must —the soul of me goes into the streets and craves love of the casual stranger, begs and prays for a little of the precious poison. I am half mad with love. She is positively at present—above my music even—everything, and now she is going. Anticipation has become realisation. The bubble has proved its fairy origin—and this is really my last experience of the kind—my last. I cannot bear it any longer; it really kills my soul; each time I feel it more deeply, because each time the wound is stabbed afresh, and the knife probes new flesh, and reawakens tortures in the old.

Beside me burns the steady flame of the candle, golden and like a blossom; but if I sit here long enough it will shrink down and flicker and die. And so is life, and so, above all, is Love—a vague, transitory, fleeting thing. And pessimism, gaunt and terrible, stares me in the face, and I cling to old illusions. I am in love with rainbows and crystal glasses. The rainbow fades and the glass is splintered into a thousand diamond fragments. Where are they scattered, in the immensity of the sky, to the four winds of heaven—gone?

In my life—so much Love in imagination; in reality 18 barren years—never pure spontaneous affectionate impulse. Adonis was —dare I seek into the heart of me—nothing but a pose. And now she comes—and pillowed against her, clinging to her hands, her face against mine, I am a child, a woman, and more than half man. [*After an indecipherable page the journal becomes legible again.*]

June 1 And then, noises began to creep so close that I went back to the bedroom, and in the darkness leaned out of the window. She slept peacefully. I could not wake her. I tried to, but without avail; and each moment my horror of everything seemed to increase. In the yard the very fence became terrible. As I stared at

the posts, they became hideous forms of Chinamen—most vivid and terrible. They leant idly against nothing, their legs crossed, their heads twitching. It was fearfully cold. I leaned further out and watched one figure. He bent and mimicked and wriggled—then his head rolled off under the house—it rolled round and round: a black ball—a cat perhaps—it leapt into space. I looked at the figure again—it was crucified, hung lifeless before me, yet sneering. Silence profound. This was too awful. I took off my dressing gown and slippers and sat on the edge of the bed, trembling, half crying, hysterical with grief. Somehow silently she woke, and came over to me—took me again into the shelter of her arms. We lay down together, still silently, she every now and then pressing me to her, kissing me, my head on her breasts, her hands round my body, stroking me, lovingly—warming me [*a word illegible*] to give me more life again. Then her voice, whispering 'Better now, darling?' I could not answer with words. And again 'I suppose you could not tell me.' I drew close to her warm sweet body, happier than I had ever been, than I could ever have imagined being—the past once more buried, clinging to her, and wishing that this darkness might last for ever.

Never was the feeling of possession so strong, I thought. Here there can be but one person with her. Here by a thousand delicate suggestions I can absorb her—for the time. What an experience! And when we returned to town, small wonder that I could not sleep, but tossed to and fro, and yearned, and realised a thousand things which had been obscure. . . . O Oscar! am I peculiarly susceptible to sexual impulse? I must be, I suppose—but I rejoice. Now, each time I see her to put her arms round me and hold me against her. I think she wanted to, too; but she is afraid and custom hedges her in, I feel. We shall go away again.

This afternoon a man is coming to see me, to bring his 'cello, to hear me play; and now that the moment *est arrivé* I do not want to see him. He is bloated, lover of a thousand actresses, roamer of every city under the sun—wealthy, bachelor. And yesterday when I met hem I behaved like a fool, simply for no reason. He ended

by asking to call today. Kathie, you are a hideous lunatic! He has such a miserably unintellectual head.

June 25 I hate everybody, loathe myself, loathe my life, and love Caesar. Each week, sometimes every day—*tout dépend*—when I think of that fascinating cult which I wish to absorb me, I come to the conclusion that all this shall truly end. Liberty, no matter what the cost, no matter what the trial. I begin hideously unhappy, make God knows how many resolves, and then break them! One day I shall not do so . . . I shall strike while the iron is white-hot, and praise myself and my unconquerable soul. From the amethyst outlook the situation is devilishly fascinating, but it cannot be permanent. The charm consists mainly in its instability. It has existed long enough. I must wander; I cannot—will not—build a house upon any damned rock. But money, money, money is what I need, and do not possess. I find a resemblance in myself to John Addington Symonds.

The day is white with frost; a low blue mist lingers daintily among the pine avenue. It is very cold, and there is a sharp sound of carts passing—quite early, too. A tramwhistle sounds; a tram passes at the end of the street. The maids are putting away crockery. Downstairs in the music-room the 'cello is dreaming. I wonder if it shall be wakened under the hands of its Maestro. I think not.

Well, a year has passed. What has happened? London behind me, M. behind me, C. gone. My music has gained, become a thing of 10,000 times more beauty and strength. I myself have changed, rather curiously. I am colossally interesting to myself. One fascinating day has been mine. My friend sent me *Dorian*.

And I have written a book of child-verse. How *absurd*! But I am very glad; it is too exquisitely unreal. And while my thoughts are redolent of purple daisies and the white sweetness of gardenias I present the world 'with this elegant thimble'. I have been engaged to a young Englishman for three weeks because his figure was so beautiful. I have been tediously foolish many times; but that is past. This year coming will be memorable. It will celebrate the

culmination of the cult. This time next year I shall have seen Mimi again.

Evening. All the morning I played, very difficult music, and was happy. In the afternoon came Caesar's father and mother and sister. Caesar's father and I played. I was unhappy, I did not play well; my hand and wrist hurt me horribly and I did not feel that glorious hidden well of music deep in me. I was too sad. Caesar's father depressed me. I felt that something was making him suffer, and I knew what it was; so I suffered, too. I gave them a great bouquet of camelias to take home. I played a whole Bach concerto by sight, and Mr. T. had copied for me something beautiful. I am glad that it came into my life today. Then in the *Abend-dämmerung* I went out into the streets. It was so beautiful; the full moon was like a strain of music heard through a closed door. Mist over everything. The hills mere shadows tonight. I became terribly unhappy, almost wept in the street; and yet music enveloped me again, caught me, held me, thank Heaven! I would have died, I should be dead but for that, I know. I sent Mr. T. a beautiful book, something that I truly treasure.

June It is just eight o'clock. Perhaps somewhere in the world he is waking or dressing, or playing or eating breakfast—and I am here. Well, greetings, Caesar, and a happy day to you. A letter from me arrives in London today. It is extraordinary to live so far from one's other self—and yet each day to feel nearer as I feel. Everything about him seems more plain, now. I think of him in any, every situation—and I feel that I understood him, too . . . I love him—but I wonder with all my soul. And here is the kernel of the matter—the Oscar-like thread.

I want to practically celebrate this day by beginning to write a book. In my brain, as I walk back each day, as I dress, as I speak, or even before playing my 'cello, a thousand delicate images float and are gone. I want to write a book that is unreal, yet wholly possible—because out of the question—that raises in the hearts of

the readers' emotions, sensations too vivid not to have effect, which causes a thousand delicate tears, a thousand sweet chimes of laughter. I shall never attempt anything approaching the histrionic; and it must be ultra-modern. I am sitting right over the fire as I write, dreaming, my face hot with the coals. Far away a steamer is calling, calling and—God, God!—my restless soul!

June 29 I do not think that I shall ever be able to write any child-verse again. The faculty has gone, I *think*. What a charming morning I have passed, with the violinist and the singer. She has a curious resemblance to H——, the completely musical face. We sat in the violinist's room; the curtains blew in and out the window, and the violets in a little glass—blue and white—were beautiful. And I am sure they both loved me.

But this afternoon has been horrible. E.K.B. bored me, I bored her. I felt unhappy, and I think so did she. But she never took the initiative.

August 11, *Sunday* Beloved, though I do not see you, know that I am yours—every thought, every feeling in me belongs to you. I woke in the morning and have been dreaming of you—and all through the day, while my outer life is going on steadily, monotonously, even drearily, my inner life I live with you, in leaps and bounds. I go through every phase of emotion that is possible, loving you. To me you are man, lover, artist, husband, friend—giving me all—and I surrendering you all—everything. And so this loneliness is not so terrible to me, because in reality my outer life is but a phantom life—a world of intangible, meaningless grey shadow. My inner life pulsates with sunshine and music and happiness—unlimited, vast, unfathomable wells of happiness—and *you*. One day we shall be together again—and then—and then only I shall realise myself—shall come to my own, because I feel—have always felt—that you hold in your hands just those closing, final bars which leave my life-song incomplete—because you are to me more necessary than anything else. Nothing matters—nothing *is* while you usurp my life—O—let it remain as it is. Do not

suddenly crush out this one beautiful flower—I am afraid—even while I am rejoicing. . . .

August 20 Rain beating upon the windows and a windstorm violent and terrible. I came up into my room to go to bed, and suddenly, half undressed, I began thinking and looking at Caesar's portrait and wondering. And I felt that I could have written: 'Beloved, I could bury my face in the pillow and weep and weep and weep. Here it is night and winter rain. You are in a glory of summer and daylight and the thunder of traffic—the call of life. I must possess it too. I must suffer and conquer. I must leave here. I cannot look ahead into the long unutterable grey vastness of future years. Do you know that you are all in all—you *are* my life? I am tired and miserable tonight. So forgive me. I am sick of winter bareness. I want to laugh and I want to listen.'

Words will not be found, but how I felt! And now to bed, hopefully, to lie and look into the darkness and think, and weave beautiful scarlet patterns, and hope to dream. My 'cello is better, but I fancy Mr. T. is annoyed with me. That must not happen. What is to become of us all? I am so eager and yet—that is all. Buon riposo.

August 27 A happy day. I have spent a perfect day. Never have I loved Mr. Trowell so much or felt so in accord with him; and my 'cello expressing everything. This morning we played Weber's Trio—tragic, fiercely dramatic, full of rhythm and accent. And then this afternoon I became frightened. I felt that I had nothing to play, that I could not touch the Concerti, that I had not improved. How horrible it was! Yet the sunlight lay on the music-room floor and my 'cello was warm to touch. He came, and in one instant we understood each other, and I think he was happy. O joyous time! It was almost inhuman. And to hear that 'Bravely done! You've a real grip of it all. Very good!' I would not have exchanged those words for all the laurel wreaths in existence. And to end with, a Weber Fugue passage, for first violin and then 'cello. It bit into my blood. Après, we had tea and currant buns in the smoking-room and ate to the accompaniment of the Fugue,

and discussed marriage and music—the mistake that a woman makes even to think that she is first in a musician's estimation; it must inevitably be first his art. I know, I understand. And also lack of sympathy. If I marry Caesar—and I thought of him all the time—I think I could prove a great many things. Mr. Trowell said: 'She must share his glories and always keep him in the heights.' He could not infuse enough love into his voice this afternoon, nor I for him. Good evening, my beloved. Tonight I shall speak through your music.

August 28 I had a letter from Aida today about Arnold Trowell, and at present I have no idea how I felt. First, so sorrowful, so hurt, so pained, that I contemplated the most outrageous things; but now only *old*, and angry and lonely, and as though everything except my 'cello had lost its interest for me. Now which is it to be? Shall I applaud him in his manner of living? Shall I say, Do as you please, live as you like, see life, have experience, increase your outlook? Or shall I condemn it? This is how I think. It's a great pity that artists do live so. But since they do—*well* . . . but I shall not.

At this time Mr. Trowell left Wellington for England. His departure evidently reduced Katherine to despair; and she plucked up courage to give her father a kind of ultimatum.

September 2 O let me lift it, ever, ever so slightly. It hangs before me ever heavy, motionless—this curtain which veils the future. Let me just hold a corner up and peep beyond. Then maybe I shall be content to let it fall.

They have left N.Z. all of them—my people—*my* Father. It has come of course. I used to think: So long as they are here, I can bear it. And now—I shall somehow or other go, too. You just see.

September 6 I am frightened and trying to be brave. This is the greatest and most terrible torture that I have ever thought of enduring. But I must have courage, face him bravely with my head high, and *fight*, for life, absolutely. Here at least I am standing

terribly, absolutely alone. What can I do? Oh, what can happen? Shall it be Heaven or shall it be Hell? I *must* win, but I shall first face the guns, resolutely. It is no use shrinking behind these hedges and great stones, remaining in the shadow. In the full glare I must go to death or life. Now is the time to prove myself, now is the fulfilment of all my philosophy and my knowledge. Think only what it means for a moment, think of all that, and then do not mind if the enemy fire and fire again. You have the magic suit of mail—belief in the outcome clothes you; but be firm and rational and calm. And at last learn that you must go forth into the great battle with a strong head. I cannot longer stay in the shadow, though my head is *hurting* me with FEAR. Here is the supreme crisis, here is the ninth wave. If it goes over my head, I must rise and shake the water out of my eyes and hair and plunge in. Oh, victory must be mine. With both hands I embrace the thought. Hold, firm, and let the music crash and deafen. It cannot hide the beating of my heart.

Oh, Kathleen, I pity you, but I see that it has to come—this great wrench. In your life you are always a coward until the very last moment, but here is the greatest thing of your life. Prove yourself strong. Dearest, I hold your two hands, and my eyes look full into yours, trustingly, firmly, resolutely, full of supreme calm, hope and illimitable belief. You must be a woman now and bear the agony of creating. Prove yourself. Be strong, be kind, be wise, and it is yours. Do not at the last moment lose courage. Argue wisely and quietly. Be more than woman. Keep your brain perfectly clear, keep your balance!!! Convince your Father that it is *la seule chose*. Think of the heaven that might be yours that is before you after this fight. They stand and wait for you with outstretched hands, and with a *glad* cry you fall into their arms—the future years. Good luck, my precious one. I love you.

In consequence of this interview it seems to have been provisionally agreed that Katherine might be allowed to return to England at the beginning of the next year, 1908. *The first paid publication of some of her work in an Australian magazine,* The Native Companion, *happened at this moment, and seems to have influenced her father.*

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October 1 I am full of ideas tonight. And they must at all costs germinate. I have seen enough to make me full of fancy. I should like to write something so beautiful, and yet modern, and yet student-like and full of summer. . . .

Now truly I ought to be able, but I don't feel by any means confident. Oh, do let me write something really good, let me sketch an idea and work it out. Here is silence and peace and splendour—bush and birds. Far away I hear builders at work upon a house—and the tram sends me half-crazy. Let it be a poem. . . .

And I *shall* do well. Bright sunshine, now. I am glad. It will be a beautiful afternoon—but, I pray you, *let* me write.

October 21 Damn my family! O Heavens, what bores they are! I detest them all heartily. I shall certainly not be here much longer. Thank Heaven for that! Even when I am alone in my room, they come outside and call to each other, discuss the butcher's orders or the soiled linen and—I feel—wreck my life. It is so humiliating. And this morning I do not wish to write, but to read Marie Bashkirtsheff. But if they enter the room and find me *merely* with a book, their tragic complaining looks upset me altogether.

Here in my room, I feel as though I was in London. In London! To write the word makes me feel that I could burst into tears. Isn't it terrible to love anything so much? I do not care at all for men, but *London*—it is life. These creatures who try to play with me—they are fools, and I despise them both. I am longing to consort with my superiors. What is it with me? Am I absolutely nobody, but merely inordinately vain? I do not know . . . but I am most fearfully unhappy. That is all. I am so unhappy that I wish I was dead—yet I should be mad to die when I have not yet lived *at all*.

Well, I have sat here for two hours and read. My right hand is quite cold. . . .

If she comes into the room I put down Marie Bashkirtsheff and seize my pen. She leans against the door, rattling the handle, and says: 'Are you writing a colossal thing—or an ordinary thing—or

anything exciting?' How completely inane! I tell her to leave the room *at once*. Now if this door would open and Mimi walk in, or Ida, or my charming Gwen—how happy I should be—with all three I can be myself.

Outside the window there is a lumbering sound of trams and an insipid sound of birds' song. Now here comes tea, and I yield to the temptation—*as usual.*

I am so eternally thankful that I did not allow J—— to kiss me. I am constantly hearing of him, and I feel that to meet him would be horrible. But why? It is ridiculous. I used him merely for copy. I am always so supremely afraid of appearing ridiculous. The feeling is fostered by Oscar Wilde, who was so absolutely the essence of *savoir faire*. I like to appear in any society entirely at my ease, conscious of my own importance, which in my estimation is unlimited, affable and very receptive. I like to appear slightly condescending, very much *du grand monde*, and to be the centre of interest. Yes, but *quelquefois*, to my unutterable chagrin, unmistakable shyness seizes me. Isn't it ludicrous? I become conscious of my hands, and slightly inclined to blush.

October 23 I thank Heaven that at present, though I am damnable, I am in love with nobody, except *myself.*

Whether to fill up the time before her proposed departure, or to be freed from her embarrassing presence while he came to a firm decision, or—it is conceivable—to make her acquainted with an aspect of New Zealand she ignored in her passionate repudiation of its urban civilisation, her father arranged for her to take part in a caravan expedition to Tawharetoa Territory—the King Country, Katherine always called it incorrectly—which lasted from November 15 to December 17. A great deal of Katherine's pencil diary of this journey is illegible.

Kaingaroa Plain. On the journey the sea was most beautiful, a silver-point etching, and a pale sun breaking through pearl clouds.

There is something inexpressibly charming to me in railway travelling. I lean out of the window, the breeze blows, buffeting and friendly, against my face, and the child spirit, hidden away

under a hundred and one grey city wrappings, bursts its bonds, and exults within me. I watch the long succession of brown paddocks, beautiful, with here a thick spreading of buttercups, there a white sweetness of arum lilies. And there are valleys, lit with the swaying light of broom blossom. In the distance, grey *whares*, two eyes and a mouth, with a bright petticoat frill of a garden, creeping round them.

On a white road once a procession of patient cattle wended their way, funeral-wise—and behind them a boy rode on a brown horse. Something in the poise of his figure, in the strong sun-burnt colour of his naked legs reminded me of Walt Whitman.

Everywhere on the hills, great masses of charred logs, looking for all the world like strange fantastic beasts: a yawning crocodile, a headless horse, a gigantic gosling, a watch-dog—to be smiled at and scorned in the daylight—but a veritable nightmare in the darkness. And now and again the silver tree-trunks, like a skeleton army, invade the hills.

At Kaitoke the train stopped for 'morning lunch', the inevitable tea of the New Zealander. The F.T. and I paced the platform, peered into the long wooden saloon where a great counter was piled with ham sandwiches, and cups and saucers, soda cake and great billys of milk. We didn't want to eat and walked to the end of the platform, and looked into the valley. Below us lay a shivering mass of white native blossom—a little tree touched with scarlet—a clump of *toi-toi* waving in the wind, and looking for all the world like a family of little girls drying their hair.

Later in the afternoon we stopped at Jakesville. How we play inside the house while Life sits on the front door step and Death mounts guard at the back!

After brief snatches of terribly unrefreshing sleep, I woke, and found the grey dawn slipping into the tent. I was hot and tired and full of discomfort—the frightful buzzing of the mosquitoes—the slow breathing of the others—seemed to weigh upon my brain for a moment, and then I found that the air was alive with bird's song. From far and near they called and cried to each other.

I got up, and slipped through the little tent-opening on to the wet grass. All round me the willows still full of gloomy shades—the caravan in the glade a ghost of itself—but across the clouded grey sky, the vivid streak of rose colour—blazoned in the day. The grass was full of clover bloom. I caught up my dressing gown with both hands and ran down to the river—and the water flowed on—musically laughing, and the green willows suddenly stirred by the breath of the dawning day, swung softly together. Then I forgot the tent and was happy. . . .

So we crept again through that frightful wire fence—which every time seemed to grow tighter and tighter, and walked along the white, soft road. On one side the sky was filled with the sunset, vivid, clear yellow and bronze green, and that incredible cloud shade of thick mauve.

Round us in the darkness, the horses were moving softly, with a most eerie sound. Visions of long dead Maoris, of forgotten battles and vanished feuds, stirred in me, till I ran through the dark glade on to a bare hill; the track was very narrow and steep, and at the summit a little Maori *whare* was painted black against the wide sky. Before it two cabbage trees stretched out phantom fingers, and a dog, watching me coming up the hill, barked madly.

Then I saw the first star, very sweet and faint, in the yellow sky, and then another and another, like little lilies, like primroses. And all round me in the gathering gloom, the woodhens called to each other with monotonous persistence. They seemed to be lost and suffering.

I reached the *whare* and a little Maori girl and three boys sprang from nowhere, and waved and beckoned. At the door a beautiful old Maori woman sat cuddling a cat. She wore a white handkerchief round her black hair, and a vivid green and black check rug wrapped round her body. Under the rug I caught a glimpse of a very full blue print dress, worn native fashion, the skirt over the bodice.

Then the rain fell heavily, drearily in to the river and the flax

swamp, and the mile upon mile of dull plain. In the distance, far and away in the distance, the mountains were hidden behind a thick grey veil.

Monday The *manuka* and sheep country—very steep and bare, yet relieved here and there by the rivers and willows, and little bush ravines. It was intensely hot—We were tired, and in the evening arrived at Pohue, where Bodley has the Accommodation House, and his fourteen daughters grow peas. We camped on the top of a hill, mountains all round, and in the evening walked in the bush, to a beautiful daisy-pied creek—fern, *tuis*, and we saw the sheep sheds. Smell and sound, 12 Maoris—their hoarse crying —dinner cooking in the homestead, the roses, the Maori cook. Post letters there—see Maoris.

Tuesday morning Start very early. Titiokiura—the rough roads and glorious mountains and bush. The top of Tarenga.

Then came rain in the morning, then a clear day—the wild mountains all round and the organ pipes. We laugh with joy all day. We lunch past the Maori *pah* and get right into the bush. In the afternoon, more perfect bush, and we camp at Tarawera Mineral Baths—the old man—the candle in a tin—the scenery, the old shed—the hot water, the felling, the road.

How we sleep! Next day walking and bush, clematis and orchids. Meet Mary by the ploughed field—and at last come to the Waipunga falls, the fierce wind, the flax and *manuka*, the bad roads, camp by the river, and then up hill, the heat to Rangitaiki. Post letters, camp on a peninsula—the purple, the ferns, the clean house—evening, the cream, the wild pigs. Woman and daughter, the man, their happiness.

Thursday The plain—rain, long threading—purple mountains, river ducks, and one clump of broom—wild horses—the great pumice fire—larks in the sun, orchids, fluff on the *manuka*, snow berries. After a time *manuka* and a tree or two, more horses, it rains violently, the fearful road. No water. Night in the tent, the

rain, climbing to see where anything is, the quivering air, the solitude. Early bed, the strange sound, the utter back blocks, fear as to whether this was *the* rain; Hector's breakfast, the kitchen, at night, at morning—our wet clothes.

In the morning rain fast—the chuffing sound of the horses. We get up very early indeed, and at six o'clock, ready to start, the sun breaks through the grey clouds. There is a little dainty wind, and a wide fissure of blue sky. Wet boots, wet motor veil, torn coat, and the dew shining on the scrub. No breakfast. We start, the road grows worse and worse. We seem to pass through nothing but scrub-covered valleys, and then suddenly comes round the corner a piece of road. Great joy, but the horses sink right into it, the traces are broken; it grows more and more hopeless. The weather breaks and rain pours down. We lose the track again and again, become rather hopeless, when suddenly far ahead we see a man on a white horse. The men leave the trap and rush off. By and by through the track we met two men, Maoris in dirty blue ducks—one can hardly speak English. They are surveyors. We stop, boil the billy and have tea and herrings. Oh, how good! Ahead the purple mountains, the thin wretched dogs, we talk to them. Then we drive the horses off, but there is no water; the dark people, our conversation—*E ta, haeremai te kai*—it is cold. The crackling fire of *manuka*, walking breast high through the *manuka*.

Lily of the valley, the [*illegible*] We approach Galatea. We lunch by the Galatea River, there is an island in the centre, and a great clump of trees. The water is very green and swift. I see a wonderful huge horse-fly, the great heat of the sun, and then the clouds roll up.

'Mother's little lamb, isn't he?' she said, tossing the baby up in the air.

'When 'e's asleep,' cried the girl, 'wearing a clean pinafore and a little starched bib.'

'Hold the horses, or they'll make a bolt for the river!' My fright.

Encounter one man, surveyor on white horse, his conversation. Nango(?) *whare*, in distance Picton. At the city gates we pull up and walk into the 'city'. There is a Store an Accommodation House, and a G.P.O. Mrs. Prodgers is here with the baby and the Englishmen. It is a lovely river, the Maori women are rather special. The post boy—the children—an accident to the horses. The Maori room, the cushions. Then a strange road in a sort of basin of strong underbush. Far away in the distance a little cloud shines in the sunlight.

Through the red gate there were waving fields and a fresh flax swamp—the homestead in the distance [*illegible*] a little field of sheep, willow and cabbage trees, and away in the distance the purple hills in the shadow—sheep in for shearing.

Here we drive in and ask for a paddock. Past the shearing shed—past the homestead to a beautiful place, with a little patch of bush trees—*tuis*, magpies—cattle—and water running through. But I know from bitter experience, that we shall be eaten with mosquitoes. Two Maori girls are washing; I go to talk with them. They are so utterly kids. While the dinner cooks I walk away—and lean over a giant log. Before me a perfect panorama of sunset—long, sweet, steel-like clouds, against the faint blue—the hills full of gloom—a little river with a tree beside it is burnished silver like the sea—the sheep, and a weird passionate abandon of birds. [*illegible*]

Then the advent of Bella, her charm in the dusk, the very dusk incarnate. Her strange dress, her plaited hair, and shy swaying figure. The life they lead here.

In the shearing sheds—the yellow dress with blue feathers on the coat and skirt with scarlet blossom. The speed, heat, and look of the sheep. Farewell. [*illegible*] Meet the guide. Wild strawberries. The pink-leaved fern.

Waki. Lunched at a space in the bush cut through a tree, and then by devious route we came to the *pah*. It was adorable. Just the collection of huts, the built place for *kumara* and potatoes. We visit first the house. No English. Then a charming little place, roses and pinks in the garden. Through the doorway, the

kettle and fire and bright tins—the woman—the child in the pink dress and red sleeves in the background. How she stands gathering her pleats of dress—she can say just 'Yes'. Then we go into the parlour—photos—a chiming clock—mats—kits—red table cloth —horsehair sofa. The child saying, 'Nicely, thank you', the shy children, the mother and the poor baby, white and naked. The other bright children; her splendid face and regal bearing.

Then at the gate of the P.O. a great bright coloured crowd, almost threatening looking—a follower of Rua,[1] with long Fijian hair and side combs—a most beautiful girl of fifteen. She is married to a patriarch; her laughing face, her hands playing with the children's hair, her smile. Across the bad river—the guide, the swimming dogs—it flows on. He stands in the water, a regal figure, then his 'All right!' and we are out. The absolute ease of his figure, so boneless—he speeds our parting journey. His voice is so good, he speaks most correctly and yet enunciates each word. We see him last stopping to brush his horses near a mound of *tui*. [*illegible*]

The sun is fearfully hot. We camp by the guide's *whare*. The splendour of the night.

. . . a *whare* on a hill, carved too; but no one is at home, though there is a suggestion of fire lately. From the saddle we look across mile upon mile of green bush, then burnt bush russet colour—blue distance and a wide cloud flecked sky. All the people must doubtless have gone shearing. I see none. Above the *whare* there is a grave, a green mound looking over.

And always through the bush this hushed sound of water running on brown pebbles. It seems to breathe the full deep bygone essence of it all. A fairy fountain of green moss. Then rounding a corner we pass several little *whares* deserted and grey. They look very old and desolate, almost haunted. On one door there is a horse collar and a torn and scribbled notice. Flowers in the garden, one clump of golden broom, one clump of yellow iris. Not even

[1] A Maori prophet.

a dog greets us. All the *whares* look out upon the river and the valley and the bush-gloried hills. The trees smothered in [*illegible*] blossom.

We pick *nga-moni*[1] with the Maori children—in the sunshine. Their talk and their queer, droll ways. They laugh very much at us, but we learn, too, tho' it is difficult, and tedious, too, because our hands are so stiff. One girl is particularly interesting with auburn hair and black eyes. She laughs with an indescribable manner, and has very white teeth. Also another Maori in a red and black striped flannel jacket. The small boy is raggedly dressed in brown—his clothes are torn in many places, he wears a brown felt hat with a *koe-koea* feather placed rakishly to one side. Here, too, I meet Prodgers. It is splendid to see once again real English people. I am so tired and sick of the third-rate article. Give me the Maori *and* the tourist, but nothing between. Also this place proved utterly disappointing after Umuroa, which was fascinating in the extreme. The Maoris here know some English and some Maori, not like the other natives. Also these people dress in almost English clothes compared with the natives here. And they wear a great deal of ornament in Umuroa and strange hair fashions. I found nothing of interest here.

So we journey from their *whare* to Waiotapu. A grey day and I drive. Long dust-thick road; and then before us, Tarawera, with the great white cleft—the poverty of the country—but the gorgeous blue mountains all round us in a great stretch of burnt *manuka*.

We lunch and begin to decide whether to go to the Wharepuni. The men folk go, but eventually come back and say that the walk is too long—also the heat of the day—but there is a great *pah*, one and a half miles away. There we go. The first view: a man on the side of the road, in a white shirt and brown pants, waits for us. Opposite is a thick Maori fence, in the distance across the paddock, several *whares* clustered together like snails on the green patch. And across the paddock a number of little boys from the ages of twelve to three, come straggling along, out at elbow, bare-footed,

[1] A kind of sweet potato.

indescribably dirty. But some of them are almost beautiful, none of them very strong. There is one great fellow . . . who speaks English. Black curls clustering round his head band, rest, almost languor in his black eyes; a slouching walk, and yet there slumbers in his face passionate unrest and strength.

On Monday night we slept outside Warbrick's *whare*—rather sweet. Mrs. Warbrick such a picture in her pink dressing-gown. [*illegible*] Her hands are like carving. She gives us a great loaf of bread, leans swaying against the wire fence in the distance to see the niece Johanna walking up the garden with a white enamel teapot. She is a fat, well-made child in a blue pinafore, her hair plaited and most strange eyes. Then she milks the cows. Wahi (?) brings us a great bowl of milk and a little cup of cream: also a cup of lard. She dines with us, teaches me Maori and smokes a cigarette. Johanna is rather silent, reads Byron and Shakespeare and wants to go back to school. W. teaches her fancy-work. At night we go and see her—the clean place, the pictures, the beds—Byron and the candle-like flowers in a glass—sweet—the paper and pens—photos of Maoris and whites too. Johanna stays by the door while we see her 'jewellery', her clothes. [*illegible*] There is something sad about it all; she is so lovely.

On the Journey to Waiotapu. In the distance the hills; to the right almost violet; to the left grey with rain. Behind, a great mount of pewter colour and silver. Then as we journey, a little line of brilliant green trees and a mound of yellow grass. We stop at a little swamp to feed the horses, and there is only the sound of a frog.

Intense stillness, almost terrible. Then the mountains are more pronounced. They are still most beautiful, and by and by a little puff of white steam [*illegible*] and by twists and turns the road passes several steam holes. Perfect stillness, and a strange red tinge on the cliffs, the baked [*illegible*] of the earth showing through.

We pass one oily bright green lake—round the sides the *manuka* clambered in fantastic blossoming. The air is heavy with sulphur and steam. . . . By and by we go to see mud volcanoes—mount the steps all slimy and green, and peer in. It bulges out of

the bowl in great dollops of loathsome colour, like a festering, filthy sore upon the earth. In a little whirling pool below, a thin coating of petroleum, black as jet. Rain began to fall. She is disgusted and outraged.

Coming back—the terrible road—the long, long distance—and finally soaking wetness and hunger. Bed and wetness again. The morning is fine but hot. The nearer they get to the town, the more she hates it. Perhaps it is the smell.

Thursday The loathsome trip.

Friday She is so tired that she sits in the sanatorium grounds all the morning. That evening—horrid.

Saturday Letters. . . . The quiet afternoon—*fearful* rain—up to the ankles—the wet camp—the fear of having to move. She thinks Rotarua is loathsome and ugly—that little Hell.

Sunday morning The early start. It seems at each mile post her heart leaps. But as they leave it, the town is very beautiful, and Whaha—full of white mist—strangely fanciful. . . . Oh, it is too hot, where they lunch. She feels so ill—so tired—her headache is most violent—she can barely open her eyes, but must lean back, each jolt of the cart pains her. But the further they go, the load begins to lighten. They meet a Maori again, walking along barefooted and strong. She shouted 'Tenakoe'.

Monday All Sunday, the further she went from Rotarua, the happier she became. Towards evening they came to a great mountain. It was very rugged and old and grim, an ancient fighting *pah*. Here the Maoris had fought, and at the top of this peak a spring bubbled. In the blue evening it was grim, forbidding, silent, towering against the sky—an everlasting monument. Then rounding the corner, they saw the Waikato river, turbulent and wildly rushing below them.

The camp in a paddock down by the river—a wonderful spot. . . . Before them a wide sheet of swift, smooth water—and a poplar tree, and a long straight line of pines. . . . Just there, on

the bank ahead of them—a *manuka* tree in full blossom leans towards the water. The paddock is full of *manuka*.

After dinner, they go through the gates—always there is a thundering sound from afar off—down the sandy path, and into a little pine avenue. The ground is red brown with needles—great boulders come in their path—the *manuka* has grown over the path. With heads bent, hands out, they battle through. And then suddenly a clearing of burnt *manuka*, and they both cry aloud. There is the river—savage, fierce, rushing, tumbling, madly sucking the life from the still, placid flow of water behind—like waves of the sea, like fierce wolves. The noise is like thunder. And right before them the lonely mountain outlined against a vivid orange sky. The colour is so intense that it is reflected in their faces, in their hair; the very rock on which they climb is hot with the colour. They climb higher.

The sunset changes, becomes mauve, and in the waning light all the stretch of burnt *manuka* is like a thin mauve mist around them. A bird, large and silent, flies from the river right into the flowering sky. There is no other sound except the voice of the passionate river.

They climb on a great black rock and sit huddled up there alone, fiercely, almost brutally thinking, like Wapi. Behind them the sun was faintly heliotrope—and then suddenly from behind a cloud a little silver moon shone through—the sudden exquisite note in the night. The sky changed, glowed again, and the river sounded more thundering, more deafening. They walked back slowly, lost the way—and found it—took up a handful of pine needles and smelt it greedily. And then in the distant paddock the tent shone like a golden poppy.

Outside, the stars and the utter spell—magic mist moving—mist over the whole world. Lying, her arms over her head—she can see faintly, like a grey thought, the moon and the mist. They are hardly distinguishable. She is not tired now—only happy. She can see the poplar tree mirrored in the water. The grass is wet. There is the faintest sound of crickets. As she brushes her hair, a wave of cold air strikes her—damp cold fingers about her heart.

The sun comes. The poplar is green now. The dew shines on everything—a little flock of geese and goslings float across the river. The mist becomes white, rises from the mountain ahead. There are the pines—and there just on the bank—the flowering *manuka* is a mass of white colour against the blue water. A lark sings, the water bubbles. She can just see ahead the gleam of the rapids. The mist seems rising and falling.

And now the day fully enters with a duet for two oboes. You *hear* it.

Sunshine—had there ever been such sunshine? They walked over the wet road through the pine trees. The sun gleamed golden, locusts crunched in the bushes. Through her thin blouse she felt it scorching her skin and was glad.

December 17 In the train. Has there ever been a hotter day. The land parched—golden with heat. The sheep are sheltering in the shadow of the rocks. In the distance the hills are shimmering with the heat. M. & I sit opposite each other. I look *perfectly charming*.

December 28 Once more I am in the train, with May Gilmour this time. I am rather amused and very happy. I know, or rather feel, that I shall have a good day, and that is worth travelling 6000 miles. But I wonder how May Newman will feel. I rather have a suspicion that she is 'off' me. But I like me, so I am happy. I have spent since returning an idle week, full of nothingness. Now before next Sunday we must be at something definite. Oh, the sea and Wagner together! I thank God that I have written five poems.

Evening. I spent it in the bush with her. She is extremely graceful, dressed in white. She floats along. We sit in the bush, she with the sunshine making her brown hair a lovely auburn—how fascinating! But I feel quiet. [*illegible*] It is like a dream. The sea is tropically blue. There is a little island—Mana Island. At whiles through the bush we see a flax swamp, burnt to a red-lead (?) and then beyond it, the sea. In the bush is a great deal of fern.

My little *pipi-wharona* is heard again and again. How hot the sand is! It burns my foot through my brown shoes. I take off my hat and put on, rather like a Spanish lady, a little brown veil. We talk music, chiefly Macdowell and Chopin, and I, alas, feel a little superior.

And that one solitary tree.

I ought to make a good author. I certainly have the ambition and the ideas. But have I the power to carry it all through? Yes, if I get back, but not unless I do. But after all, why not?

December 31 [*Following some attempts at a different script*] I shall never, I shall never be able to change my handwriting. In the room below me a man is smoking a cigarette. The perfume floats through my window, and I am besieged by so many memories that for a little space I forget to remember. Outside in the evening sky there is a wide lightness. In the garden next door the lawn is being mowed. I hear the sharp monotonous clattering sound of the machine. It is the 31st of December, very cool and quiet. The sounds of the lawn mower emphasise my rustic surroundings. And that cigarette!

1908

January 1 The year has dawned—MY YEAR 1908.

And a Happy New Year to you. Oh the sky, the great star, the light, the sound, the bitter sea. . . .

Well—I have the brain and also the inventive faculty.

What else is needed?

Evidently, from the bare fact of the succeeding entries, her father had withdrawn his provisional permission for Katherine to return to England. Alpers' Katherine Mansfield: A Biography (*p.* 99) *throws some light upon what had happened. Katherine appears to have written an impassioned account of an adventure after a dance which fell into her parents' hands. Not unnaturally, they thought twice about letting her loose.*

January 23 I wait for Clara Butt and Kennerley Rumford.

Now there is Kathleen Smith's sister, a pale slender girl, with long black hair, brushed back from her face—a most childish figure. She is with her brother and sister. She wears a cream satin opera coat, with long lace in the sleeves. The dull quiet house, the arum lilies on the balcony, the heavy furniture, the library full of dust, the faded photographs of her father, her mother's father's, her quaint manners, insufficient food, and no daylight. Such is the life to this Althea. Dickens, of course, Thackeray and Stevenson. Some letters, a great many old diaries. So she grows older, but into all this silence. The old servant and the decrepit terrible dogs with impossible names. The walks—very sedate; occasional rides in a tramcar; the feeble music. She plays on the piano. It has pleated satin let in at the rosewood back. Meagre fires, no visits, and a small bedroom with a little white china angel holding holy water. The church, the romantic influence. How one day she puts two roses in her hair and stands in front of a mirror and sees that she is beautiful.

February (?) Night. J'attends pour la premiere fois dans ma vie le crise de ma vie. As I wait, a flock of sheep pass down the street in the moonlight. I hear the cracking of the whip, and behind, the dark heavy cart—like a death cart, il me semble. And all in this sacrificial light, I look lovely. I do not fear. I only feel. I pray the dear Lord I have not waited too long, for my soul hungers as my body all day has hungered and cried for him. Ah come now—soon. Each moment il me semble is a moment of supreme danger. But this man I love with all my heart, the other I do not even care about. It comes. I go to bed.

In the pocket of an old coat I found one of Ariadne's gloves—a cream suède glove fastening with two silver buttons. And it has been there two years. But still it holds some exquisite suggestion of Carlotta; still when I lay it against my check I can detect the secret of the perfume she affected. O Carlotta, have you remembered? We were floating down Regent Street in a hansom,

on either side of us the blossoms of golden light, and ahead a little half-hoop of a moon.

February 10 I shall end—of course—by killing myself.

March 18 I purchase my brilliance with my life—It were better that I were dead—really.

I am unlike others because I have experienced all there is to experience. But there is no-one to help me. Of course Oscar—Dorian Gray has brought this S.S. to pass.

May 1 I am now much worse than ever. Madness must lie this way. Pull yourself up!

May 17 9 p.m. Sunday night. Full Moon.

Now to plan it.

O, Kathleen, do not weave any more of these fearful meshes—for you have been so loathsomely unwise. Do take wisdom from all that you have and still must suffer. I really know that you *can't* stay as you are now. Be good—for the love of God—be good—and brave, and do tell the truth more, and live a better life—I am tired of all this deceit—and the moon still shines—and the stars are still there. You'd better go and see the doctor tomorrow about your heart—and then try to solve all the silly, drivelling problems. Go anywhere. Don't stay here—accept work—fight against people. As it is, with a rapidity unimaginable, you are going to the Devil. PULL UP NOW YOURSELF. It is really most extraordinary that I should feel so confident of dying of heart failure—and entirely Arthur's fault.[1]

May I have just finished reading a book by Elizabeth Robins, *Come and Find Me*. Really, a clever, splendid book; it creates in me such a sense of power. I feel that I do now realise, dimly, what women in the future will be capable of. They truly as yet have never had their chance. Talk of our enlightened days and our

[1] The word is quite plainly written 'Arthur's'; but I can trace no character of that name in the hectic drama of Katherine's life at this period.

emancipated country—pure nonsense! We are firmly held with the self-fashioned chains of slavery. Yes, now I see that they *are* self-fashioned, and must be self-removed. Eh bien—now where is my ideal and ideas of life? Does Oscar—and there is a gardenia yet alive beside my bed—does Oscar now keep so firm a strong-hold in my soul? No; because I am growing capable of seeing a wider vision—a little Oscar, a little Symons, a little Dolf Wyllarde —Ibsen, Tolstoi, Elizabeth Robins, Shaw, D'Annunzio, Meredith. To weave the intricate tapestry of one's own life, it is well to take a thread from many harmonious skeins—and to realise that there must be harmony. Not necessary to grow the sheep, comb the wool, colour and brand it—but joyfully take all that is ready, and with that saved time, *go* a great way further. Independence, resolve, firm purpose, and the gift of discrimination, *mental clearness*—here are the inevitables. Again, Will—the realisation that Art is absolutely self-development. The knowledge that genius is dormant in every soul—that that very individuality which is at the root of our being is what matters so poignantly.

Here then is a little summary of what I need—power, wealth and freedom. It is the hopelessly insipid doctrine that love is the only thing in the world, taught, hammered into women, from generation to generation, which hampers us so cruelly. We must get rid of that bogey—and then, then comes the opportunity of happiness and freedom.

October 12 This is my unfortunate month. I dislike exceedingly to have to pass through it; each day fills me with terror.

December 21 I should like to write a life much in the style of Walter Pater's *Child in the House*. About a girl in Wellington; the singular charm and barrenness of that place—with climatic effects—wind, rain, spring, night—the sea, the cloud pageantry. And then to leave the place and go to Europe. To live there a dual existence—to go back and be utterly disillusioned, to find out the truth of all—to return to London—to live there an existence so

full and strange that life itself seemed to greet her—and ill to the point of death return to W. and die there. A story—no, it would be a sketch, hardly that, more a psychological study—of the most erudite character—I should fill it with climatic disturbance—and also of the strange longing for the artificial. I should call it *Strife*—and the child I should call—ah, I have it—I'd make her a half-caste Maori and call her Maata. Bring into it Warbrick the guide.

Eventually Katherine was allowed to depart, with an allowance of £100 a year. She sailed from Lyttleton in July, arriving in London on August 24, 1908, and went to live at Beauchamp Lodge, a hostel for women music-students. She lost no time in renewing her relations with Caesar's family, who were living at Carlton Hill, and fell in love with Caesar's brother, Garnet. He was now a violinist in a travelling opera company. She stayed with him in November in Hull.

In spite of this, she suddenly married George Bowden, a teacher of singing, on March 2, 1909; and as suddenly left him on the morning after. An account of this extraordinary episode will be found in Alpers (pp. 113–119). She returned for a time to her lover, now at Liverpool. News of her marriage and separation reached New Zealand, and her mother came post haste to England to save what could be saved of the situation, arriving on May 27. Alpers says that her mother was ignorant of the fact that her daughter was pregnant. It may be so; but it is scarcely credible that Katherine herself was ignorant of it, as he suggests. Mrs. Beauchamp, having taken her daughter to Bavaria, and arranged for her to stay in a convent there, left for New Zealand on June 10.

1909

Brussels: Frühling 1909.

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now
Is hung with bloom along the bough
And stands about the woodland ride
Wearing white for Eastertide.

Good Friday It is the evening of Good Friday; the day of all the year, surely, the most significant. I always, always feel the nail-prints in my hands, the sickening thirst in my throat, the

agony of Jesus. He is surely not dead, and surely all we love who have died are *close* to us. Grandmother and Jesus and all of them. Only lend me your aid. I *thirst* too—I hang upon the Cross. Let me be crucified—so that I may cry 'It is finished'.

I could find no rest.
Tossed, and turned, and cried aloud 'I suffer'.
In my tortured breast
Turned the knife, and probed the flesh more deeply

Life seemed like a wall,
Brick and fouled and grimed

Oh delicate branches, reaching up for the sun!
The plants on tiptoe, stretching up to the light!

I cannot say it now. Maybe I shall be able to, much later. In an agony I shall suddenly express myself. It is the joy of self-expression.

Do you see him?
Look, in the half-light here,
High behind the curtain hanging there,
See how it swings and trembles.
Oh woman, do not cry upon him so.
It is the wind that makes the curtain blow.
Pillow thy head upon my barren breast.
The child! he comes and stands beside my chair,
Then claps his hands upon my eyes. Who's there,
Motherling?' 'I've no notion—It's not *you*.'

The child—he came into this room to-night,
Groping his way. 'Why haven't you a light,
Mother?' 'My eyes were tired with weeping, dear.'
'I'm not afraid of dark if you stay here.'
(Oh, the thought in heart and brain
He cannot see the light again.)

The child—he came and stood beside my chair
Then pressed his hands before my eyes. 'Who's there?
Motherling, guess!' 'It never could be you'
'Oh no! Three guesses.' 'Wait then, that's too few.'
The only hands to bring her calm,
Folded closely, palm to palm.

The child—he shyly stood in front of me
'Am I too big to sit upon your knee,
Motherling? I'm too tired for any fun.
If I'm too heavy—' 'No, my little son!'
The blood within her veins ran cold;
Light he was—so light—to hold.
The child—he hid his face against my breast
Crying 'Oh, mother—let me rest!'

In the train to Harwich. I am afraid I really am not at all myself. So here I am. I took a drug this afternoon and slept till after five—then Ida woke me. Still half asleep, and, terribly tired, I packed, had some supper,—she most excited at the prospect of me going away again and still on the spur of the moment I take the train to Liverpool St. Bought a second-class ticket, and here I am, tired out still but unable to sleep. The carriage is full but Garnie I feel that I am going *home*. To escape England—it is my great desire. I loathe England. It is a dark night, full of rain. There is a little child opposite me in a red cloak sleeping; she shakes her hair just as Dolly did when I was a girl in Brussels so many years ago. Everybody sleeps but I. The train shatters through the darkness. I wear a green silk scarf and a dark brown hat with a [*illegible*] of dull pink velvet. I travel in the name of Mrs. K. Bendall.

Morning in the *Bruxelles*. I have slept splendidly, taken a small brandy and soda before turning in, and now feel almost better, though I have still that intolerable headache which has haunted me. I sit in the ladies' cabin on my hat-box, washed and dressed,

and very suddenly amused—at everybody. I have just washed and brushed my hair. The people! Oh, the fat lady in pink wool—ye Gods! And the other precious old English governess who intends staying at a convent just outside Brussels, Everybody thinks I am French. I must go to Cook's and see about everything.

April 29 In this room. Almost before this is written I shall read it from another room, and such is life. Packed again, I leave for London. Shall I ever be a happy woman again? Je ne pense pas, je ne veux pas. Oh, to be in New York! Hear me! I can't rest. That's the agonizing part.

'Tis a sweet day, brother—but I see it not. My *body* is so self-conscious. Je pense of all the frightful things possible—'all this filthiness'. Sick at heart, till I am physically sick—with no home, no place in which I can hang up my hat and say here I belong, for there is no such place in the wide world for me. But *attendez*: you must *not* eat, and you had better not sleep! No good *looking* 'fit' and *feeling* dead.

In the train to Anvers. I love Belgium, for I love green and mauve. I wonder when I shall sit and read aloud to my little son.

The following is apparently an unposted letter to her lover. It is headed 'A C.F. letter. Night'.

June 1909 It is at last over, this wearisome day, and dusk is beginning to sift in among the branches of the drenched chestnut tree. I think I must have caught cold in my beautiful exultant walk yesterday, for today I am ill. After I wrote to you, I began to work but could not—*and* so cold. Fancy wearing two pairs of stockings and two coats and a hot-water bottle in June, and shivering. . . . I think it is the pain that makes me shiver and feel dizzy. To be alone all day, in a house whose every sound seems foreign to you, and to feel a terrible confusion in your body which affects you mentally, suddenly pictures for you detestable incidents, revolting personalities, which you only shake off to find recurring again as the pain seems to diminish and grow worse again. Alas! I shall not walk with bare feet in wild woods again. Not until I have grown accustomed to the climate. . . .

The only adorable thing I can imagine is for my Grandmother to put me to bed and bring me a bowl of hot bread and milk, and standing, her hands folded, the left thumb over the right, say in her adorable voice: 'There, darling, isn't that nice?' Oh, what a miracle of happiness that would be! To wake later to find her turning down the bedclothes to see if your feet were cold, and wrapping them up in a little pink singlet, softer than a cat's fur. . . . Alas!

Some day when I am asked: 'Mother, where was I born?' and I answer: 'In Bavaria, dear,' I shall feel again, I think, this coldness —physical, mental—heart coldness, hand coldness, soul coldness. Beloved, I am not so sad tonight. It is only that I feel so desperately the need of speech—the conviction that you are *present*. . . . That is all.

Sunday Morning Yet another Sunday. What has this day not brought us both? For me it is full of sweetness and anguish. Glasgow—Liverpool—Carlton Hill—*Our House*. It is raining again today—just a steady persistent rain that seems to drift one from one memory to the other. When I had finished my letter to you I went down to supper, drank a little soup, and the old Doctor next me suddenly said: 'Please go to bed *now*,' and I went like a lamb and drank some hot milk. It was a night of agony. When I felt morning was at last come, I lighted a candle, looked at the watch, and found it was just a quarter to twelve! Now I know what it is to fight a drug. Veronal was on the table by my bed. Oblivion—deep sleep—think of it! But I didn't take any. Now I am up and dressed, propping. . . .

Warishofen: Bayern: July 4, 1909.

Far in a western brookland
That bred me long ago
The poplars stand and tremble
By pools I used to know. . . .

He hears: long since forgotten
In fields where I was known,

Here I lie down in London
And turn to rest alone.

Ich muss streiten um vergessen zu können; ich muss bekämpfen, um mich selbst wieder achten zu können. Ich muss mich nützlich machen, um wieder an das Leben glauben zu können.

Ich *will* arbeiten, ich will *mit* dem Glück, um die Zufriedenheit kämpfen.

Wir mussen jeder allein sein—allein arbeiten, allein kämpfen, um unsere Kraft, unsere Opferwilligkeit zu beweisen.

The Grandmother.

Underneath the cherry trees
The grandmother in her lilac printed gown
Carried Little Brother in her arms.
A wind, no older than Little Brother,
Shook the branches of the cherry trees
So that the blossom snowed on her hair
And on her faded lilac gown
And all over Little Brother.
I said 'May I see?'
She bent down and lifted a corner of his shawl,
He was fast asleep,
But his mouth moved as if he were kissing.
'Beautiful!' said the Grandmother, nodding and smiling,
But my lips quivered,
And looking into her kind face
I wanted to be in the place of Little Brother,
To put my arms round her neck
And kiss the two tears that shone in her eyes.

(1909)

Shortly afterwards, K. M., who passionately desired to have her baby, had a miscarriage. 'Finding the loss unbearable, she craved a child to take the place of her own. . . . Ida Baker, charged with finding one, found

Walter, a little boy who lived in a mews off Welbeck Street and had lately been ill. Walter went to Wœrishofen for several weeks, and was nursed back to health by Sally, as he called Katherine.' (*Alpers, p.* 125).

1910–1911

In January 1910, *Katherine returned to London, and apparently returned for a little while to her husband, at whose suggestion she took some of the stories, written in Bavaria, to* The New Age. *A. R. Orage, the editor, welcomed them.*

In the spring she underwent a painful operation for peritonitis. A difficult convalescence at Rottingdean was complicated by rheumatic fever. When Katherine returned to London, she went to live in Cheyne Walk, where she formed a friendship with William Orton, who gave an account of it in his autobiographical novel, The Last Romantic.

At the beginning of 1911 *Katherine moved to Clovelly Mansions in the Grays Inn Road. According to Alpers* (*p.* 139) *she was with child again in the spring. Alpers indicates that the pregnancy was terminated by an abortion. Whether or not this is true—and I personally am sceptical, for there is evidence that the previous operation made it very improbable that she should bear a child—there is no doubt that the consequences of these two operations* (*if there were two*) *were of great psychological importance in Katherine's life. The chances of a child were now remote. Katherine spent much of her secret life in hoping against hope for the child which never came.*

1910 I have a perfectly frantic desire to write something really fine—and an inability to do so which is infinitely distressing, as you may imagine. However, let's make the attempt even though it should come to nothing at all great.

March 14 This almost mad longing to work is gnawing at me—it was as though some insidious and terrible worm ate and ate at my heart. A frightful intolerable agony overcame me.

Along the Gray's Inn Road.

Over an opaque sky grey clouds moving heavily like the wings of tired birds. Wind blowing: in the naked light buildings and people appear suddenly grotesque—too sharply modelled, maliciously tweaked into being.

A little procession wending its way up the Gray's Inn Road. In front, a man between the shafts of a hand-barrow that creaks under the weight of a piano-organ and two bundles. The man is small and greenish brown, head lolling forward, face covered with sweat. The piano-organ is bright red, with a blue and gold 'dancing picture' on either side. The bundle is a woman. You see only a black mackintosh topped with a sailor hat; the little bundle she holds has chalkwhite legs and yellow boots dangling from the loose ends of the shawl. Followed by two small boys, who walk with short steps, staring intensely at the ground, as though afraid of stumbling over their feet.

No word is spoken; they never raise their eyes. And this silence and preoccupation gives to their progress a strange dignity.

They are like pilgrims straining forward to Nowhere, dragging, and holding to, and following after that bright red, triumphant thing with the blue and gold 'dancing picture' on either side.

The following entries are derived from the late William Orton's The Last Romantic. *There is no reason to doubt their authenticity. Orton is Michael; Lais is a girl with whom he was in love. Whether Katherine actually spelt her name Catherine at this time, I cannot say.*

September 6, 1911, *Wednesday* Michael came yesterday afternoon and asked me for Black Opal [a ring she had given him that they shared as a sort of talisman]. I quickly took Black Opal off my finger. He was dressed in pale grey with that delightful vivid tie. I promised to see him later at Queen's Hall—yes, yes, I wished to go. When the bells were striking five the Man came to see me. He gathered me up in his arms and carried me to the Black Bed. Very brown and strong was he. . . . It grew dark. I crouched against him like a wild cat. Quite impersonally I admired my

silver stockings bound beneath the knee with spiked ribbons, my yellow suède shoes fringed with white fur. How vicious I looked! We made love to each other like two wild beasts. Very late at night we sat under a tree in the Park. The moon shone under the branches of fast-withering trees. The grass smelled of earth. In deep shadow lovers lay entwined. But all about me was Michael. He came towards me—passed me by, paused, lighting a cigarette —I saw him far in the distance—his footsteps were lightly passing on the road behind me—I wanted to spring to my feet and cry to the moon 'je veux mourir, je veux mourir'—I wanted to wring my hands and rock to and fro and weep—and then I grew quite calm and still. . . . He came home with me for one moment. I lit a candle—the world faded away. I acted. He tore my clothes from my shoulders. I laughed—bent forward—graceful and lithe—blew out the candle and stood naked to the waist in the moon-lit room. 'My beautiful, my wonder!' He knelt before me, his arms round my body. I crushed him against me—shook back my hair and laughed at the moon. I felt mad with passion—I wanted to kill. . . . By and by he left me.

This morning I spread the pictures of St. Malo on the writing desk; I turned the leaves of his sketch book. My love for Michael has changed: it is become more imperative and compelling. Sometimes I think hopelessly that we will never be together—yet if there is any truth left in me I know that only together shall we two create and be fulfilled the one in the other. Michael and myself alone are truthful. . . . I want to begin another life; this one is worn to tearing point. . . .

I am very lonely and ill today. Outside my window the buildings are wreathed in mist. There is a sharp rapping sound and the cry of voices from the timber yard—drowned men are building a raft under the sea. I lie face downwards in the green water, idly swinging, but they do not see and only my shadow touches them.

The year is drawing to a close.

The world is beautiful tonight
So many stars shine in the sky,

And homeward, lightly hand in hand
The happy people pass me by

I lose my way down every path
I stumble over every stone
And every gate and every door
Is locked 'gainst me alone.

K. M. 6 *Sept.* 1911.

Lais has just been. She is so beautiful that I see no other beauty, and content myself with the sweet Lais. Her slim body in the grey frock—her hands cradling her vivid hair—she lay on the yellow pillows. When her voice speaks in laughter and her eyes shine, and a pink colour floods her cheeks, and her mouth is red as berries, I understand all the millions of reasons why God set the sun in the sky—that it might shine one day through closed curtains and light the beauty of Lais. We are the three eternities—Michael and Lais and I. For Michael is darkness and light and Lais is flame and snow and I am sea and sky. O, what a pity she is not a princess—with little white boots tipped with ermine and a silver shirt and a blue petticoat embroidered with pink apple blossom and a long flowing gown of pale green velvet worked with golden dragons and lined with vivid orange. A live snake for her girdle with eyes made of diamond-shaped emeralds—her hair flowing and caught at the ends with tassels of pink corals. She would ride in an ebony sleigh lined with the feathers of wild parrots—flamingoes would fly over her head for a canopy. One day she shall be my inspiration for fairy tales.

Midnight Après tout I live merely from day to day—taking, in everything apart from my work, the line of least resistance for the sake of my work. Do other artists feel as I do—the driving necessity—the crying need—the hounding desire that [will] never be satisfied—that knows no peace? I believe there was a time when I might have stopped myself, and days even weeks would have drifted by—but now there is not an hour. I breathe it in the air. I am saturated with it. Then Catherine what is your

ultimate desire—to what do you so passionately aspire? To write books and stories and sketches and poems.

October 29 The Miracle of Miracles has happened: my life is over and I am at Peace. I am writing in Michael's book; it is late night—tomorrow I shall be far away. Look upon me, Michael—for it is not enough I make these statements; I have a fancy that it might be interesting to you to see in blinding light your Catherine. I am become a little child again. I know not the world, the flesh and the devil. I live only, only in my imagination. All my *feelings* are there and my *desires* and my ambitions. It is not that I wish so much to renounce the world—it has gone. I have left it—one little step—I did not even look or know—and now where I am in my secret unseen place I shall abide.

1912–1913

At the end of 1911 *Katherine and I met at the house of W. L. George. The meeting and its consequences are described in* Between Two Worlds. *At the end of April* 1912 *I became a lodger in her flat, and after some weeks, her lover. The following fragment of her journal relates to the former phase of our relations.*

Just as she was making some tea, he came in and she called; going to the door and seeing him standing in the passage. Hullo! they said. He came in. She said, 'Like some tea?' Yes, he would. He'd met Jo Simpson out—she must meet Jo. They drank tea out of bowls and started talking and smoking. He told her his life, she told him hers. She went over to the window and called out 'Come over here!' He saw the sea and a ship. Yes, so did she. It moved—with sails. They leaned from the window and talked—a great deal. Then she said, 'I'm going to bed. Goodnight!' 'Goodnight!' 'You would like a big coat?' 'No thanks—at any rate I've got mine.'

But how charming he looked, with his great umbrella furled—and walking like a god.

After many vicissitudes, described in Between Two Worlds, *in*

December 1913 *we went to live in Paris, where I hoped to be able to make a living. My hope was disappointed, and at the end of two months I had to return to London. In Paris I renewed my friendship with Francis Carco.*

1914

January. Paris.

(At the top of accounts beginning Tea, Chemist, Marmalade.)

Tea, the chemist and marmalade—
Far indeed to-day I've strayed,
Through paths untrodden, shops unbeaten,
And now the bloody stuff is eaten.
The chemist, the marmalade and tea,
Lord, how nice and cheap they be!

Tips and fares and silly femmes
Have skipped about my day like lambs,
And great their happiness increased
Since I am the one who has been fleeced!

' "In Russia", Tchehov said to Gorky, "an honest man is a sort of bogey that nurses frighten children with." It is wonderful how like Gorky Tchehov talked when he talked to Gorky' (*George Calderon*).

I'd like to follow that 'lead'.

'A calm, irresistible well-being—almost mystic in character, and yet doubtless connected with physical conditions' (*Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal*).

Writes Dorothy:

William (P.G.) is very well,
And gravely blithe—you know his way—
Talking with woodruff and harebell
And idling all the summer day
As he can well afford to do.
(P.G. for that again.) For who

Is more Divinely Entitled to?
He rises and breakfasts sharp at seven,
Then pastes some fern-fronds in his book,
Until his milk comes at eleven
With two fresh scones baked by the cook
And then he paces in the sun
Until we dine at half past one.
'God and the cook are very good,'
Laughs William, relishing his food.
(Sometimes the tears rush to my eyes:
How kind he is, and oh, how wise!)
After, he sits and reads to me
Until at four we take our tea.
My dear, you hardly would believe
That William could so sigh and grieve
Over a simple, childish tale
How 'Mary trod upon the Snail,'
Or 'Little Ernie lost his Pail'.
And then perhaps a good half-mile
He walks to get an appetite
For supper, which we take at night
In the substantial country style.
By nine he's in bed and fast asleep,
Not *snoring*, dear, but very deep,
Oh, very deep asleep indeed. . . .

And so on *ad lib*. What a Pa man!

I am going to read Goethe. Except for a few poems, I know nothing of his well. I shall read *Poetry and Truth* immediately.

'When all is done human life is at its greatest and best but a little froward child to be played with, and humoured a little, to keep it quiet until it falls asleep, and then the care is over' (*Temple*).

That's the sort of strain—not for what it says and means, but for the 'lilt' of it—that sets me writing.

The Child in my Arms.

'Will you touch me with the child in my arms?' is no mere pleasantry. Change the 'will' into 'can' and it's *tief, sehr tief!* I was thinking just now . . . that I hardly dare give rein to my thoughts of J. and my longing for J. And I thought: if I had a child, I would play with it now and *lose myself in it* and kiss it and make it laugh. And I'd use a child as my guard against my deepest feeling.

When I felt: 'No, I'll think no more of this; it's intolerable and unbearable,' I'd dance the baby.

That's true, I think, of all, all women. And it accounts for the curious look of security that you see in young mothers: they are safe from any *ultimate* state of feeling because of the child in their arms. And it accounts also for the women who call men 'children'. Such women fill themselves with their men—gorge themselves really into a state of absolute heartlessness. Watch the sly, satisfied smile of women who say 'Men are nothing but babies!'

'They were neither of them quite enough in love to imagine that £350 a year would supply them with all the comforts of life' (Jane Austen's *Elinor and Edward*). My God! say I.

I went to J.'s room and looked through the window. It was evening, with little light, and what was there was very soft—the Freak Hour when people never seem to be quite in focus. I watched a man walking up and down the road—and he looked like a fly walking up a wall—and some men straining up with a barrow—all bottoms and feet. In the house opposite, at a ground-floor window, heavily barred, sat a little dark girl in a grey shawl reading a book. Her hair was parted down the middle: she had a small, oval face. She was perfectly charming, so set in the window with the shining white of the book. I felt a sort of Spanish infatuation. . . .

It is as though God opened his hand and let you dance on it a little, and then shut it up tight—so tight that you could not even cry. . . . The wind is terrible to-night. I am very tired—but I can't go to bed. I can't *sleep* or *eat*. Too tired.

'It was the touch of art that P. was suffering, the inexorable magic touch that still transforms in spite of us; that never hesitates to test and examine the materials it has to transmute, but never fails to transmute them.'

By the end of February 1914 we had returned to London, with very little but the clothes we stood in. For a few weeks we lived in a furnished flat in Beaufort Mansions, Chelsea. From the back windows one had a view of a timber-yard and a cemetery.

A Dream.

March 6 K. T. [Katie] and her sister were walking down a road that was bounded on one side by a high hill and had on the other a deep ravine. So deep was the ravine that the cliffs at its base shone like points of teeth, sharp and tiny. Her sister was very frightened and clung to her arm, trembling and crying. So K.T. hid her terror and said, 'It is all right. It is perfectly all right.' She had a little black fur muff slipped over one hand.

Suddenly there came driving towards them a chariot like the one in her blue Latin book, drawn by six stumpy horses and driven by a charioteer in a skull cap. They came at a furious gallop, but the charioteer was calm; a quiet evil smile dyed his lips.

'Oh, K.T.! Oh, K.T.! I'm frightened,' sobbed her sister.

'It's quite all right. It's perfectly all right,' scolded K.T.

But as she watched the chariot a strange thing took place. Though the horses maintained their tearing gallop, they were not coming towards her and her sister, *but were galloping backwards*, while the charioteer smiled as though with deep satisfaction. K.T. put her little black muff over her sister's face. 'They're gone. They're quite gone.' But now the deafening clatter came from behind them like the sound of an army of horsemen in clashing armour. Louder and louder and nearer and nearer came the noise. Oh, K.T.! Oh, K.T.!' moaned her sister and K.T. shut her lips, only pressing her sister's arm. The noise was upon them—in a moment—*now*.

And nothing passed but a black horse as tall as a house with a

dark serene rider in a wide hat, gliding past them like a ship through dark water, and gliding importantly down the hill. The sight was so fearful that K.T. knew she dreamed. 'I must wake up at once.' And she made every effort to shut her eyes and shake away the scene, but it would not go. She tried to call and she felt her lips open, but no sound would come. She shouted and screamed without a sound until at last she felt her bed and lifted her head into the burning dark of the bedroom.

The Toothache Sunday.

Ah, why can't I describe all that happens! I think quite seriously that L.M. and I are so extraordinarily interesting. It is not while *the thing* is happening that I think that, but the significance is near enough to bite its heels and make me start, too. Have I ruined her happy life? Am I to blame? When I see her pale and so tired that she shuffles her feet as she walks when she comes to me—drenched after tears; when I see the buttons hanging off her coats and her skirt torn—why do I call myself to account for all this, and feel that I am responsible for her? She gave me the gift of herself. 'Take me, Katie. I am yours. I will serve you and walk in your ways, Katie.' I ought to have made a happy being of her. I ought to have 'answered her prayers'. They cost me so little and they were so humble. I ought to have probed my own worthiness of a disciple. Yes, I am altogether to blame.

Sometimes, I excuse myself: 'We were too much of an age. I was experimenting and being hurt when she leaned upon me. I couldn't have stopped the sacrifice if I'd wanted to'—but it's all prevarication. To-night I saw her all drawn up with pain, and I came from Jack's room to see her crouched by my fire like a little animal. So I helped her to bed on the sofa and made her a hot drink and brought her some rugs and my dark eider-down. And as I tucked her up, she was so touching—her long fair hair—so familiar, remembered for so long—drawn back from her face that it was easy to stoop and kiss her, not as I usually do, one little half-kiss, but quick loving kisses such as one delights to give a tired child. 'Oh!' she sighed, 'I have dreamed of this.' (All the

while I was faintly revolted.) 'Oh!' she breathed, when I asked her if she was comfortable. 'This is Paradise, beloved!' Good God! I must be at ordinary times a callous brute. It is the first time in all these years that I have leaned to her and kissed her like that. I don't know why I always shrink ever so faintly from her touch. I could not kiss her lips.

Ah, how I long to talk about it, sometimes—not for a moment, but until I am tired out and have got rid of the burden of memory. It is ridiculous in me to expect Jack to understand or to sympathize; and yet when he does not and is bored or hums, I am dreadfully wretched—mainly perhaps because of my own inability to enchant him.

. . . Lifted her poor face all stained and patched with crying.

Her body was obedient, but how slowly and gravely it obeyed, as though protesting against the urge of her brave spirit.

There was no sound in the room but her quiet breathing and the fluttering rush of the fire and the sting of the rain on the glass. Outside, lights appeared at one and then another window. The sky was grey and folded except for one lane of pale red fringed with little clouds.

Content to stand outside and bathe and bask in the light that fell from Katie's warm bright windows, content to listen to the voice of her darling among other voices and to look for her darling's gracious shadow.

(*March.*)

The view from my window this morning is so tremendously exciting. A high wind is blowing and the glass is dashed with rain. In the timber-yard beside the cemetery there are large pools of water, and smoke blows from. . . .

The Last Friday To-day the world is cracking. I am waiting for Jack and Ida. I have been sewing as Mother used to—with one's heart pushing in the needle. Horrible! But is there really something far more horrible than ever could resolve itself into reality, and is it that something which terrifies me so? In the middle of it I looked out and saw the workmen having lunch.

They had lighted a fire and sat on a board balanced by two barrels. They were eating and smoking and cutting up sandwiches. I really have a faint idea that it might send one mad.

March 19 Dreamed about New Zealand. Very delightful.

March 20 Dreamed about N.Z. again—one of the painful dreams when I'm there and hazy about my return ticket.

March 21 Travelled with two brown women. One had a basket of chickweed on her arm, the other a basket of daffodils. They both carried babies bound, somehow, to them with a torn shawl. Neat spare women with combed and braided hair. They slung talk at each other across the bus. Then one woman took a piece of bread from her sagging pocket and gave it to the baby, the other opened her bodice and put the child to her breast. They sat and rocked their knees and darted their quick eyes over the bus load. Busy and indifferent they looked.

March 22 Went to the Albert Hall with Beatrice Campbell. A bad, dull concert. But I thought all the while that I'd rather be with musical people than any others, and that they're mine, really. A violinist (miles away) bent his head and his hair grew like G.'s:[1] that made me think so, I suppose. I ought to be able to write about them wonderfully.

March 23 When I get by myself, I am always more or less actively miserable. Nobody knows, or could, what a weight L. is upon me. She simply drags me down and then sits on me, calm and page. The strongest reason for my happiness in Paris was that I was safe from her. If it were not for J. I should live quite alone. It's raining; I have a cold and my fire has gone out. Sparrows outside are cheeping like chickens. Oh heavens! what a different scene the sound recalls! The warm sun, and the tiny yellow balls, so dainty, treading down the grass blades, and Sheehan giving me the smallest chick wrapped in a flannel to carry to the kitchen fire.[2]

[1]Garnet Trowell's.

[2]Patrick Sheehan was the coachman-gardener at ChesneyWold, Karori. He is described in a vivid piece, *About Pat*, written in 1905 (see the *Scrapbook*) and was the original of Pat in *Prelude*.

March 24 Mother's birthday. I woke at 2 o'clock and got up and sat on the box of the window thinking of her. I would love to see her again and the little frown between her brows, and to hear her voice. But I don't think I will. My memory of her is so complete that I don't think it will be disturbed.[1]

The P.'s dined with us last night. It was dull. They are worthy and pleasant, but Mrs. P. is a weight, and P. makes me feel *old*. He only likes me because of what I used to be like, and he thinks the 'normal' me abnormally quiet and a bit lifeless. I don't want to see them again. Thank God! there's a sprinkle of sun to-day.

The river to-night was low and the little walls and towers and chimneys on the opposite bank black against the night. I keep thinking of *Paris* and *money*. I am getting all *my* spring out of the sunsets.

March 25 Ida and I travelled miles to-day. We sat in a bus talking, and now and again when I looked up, I kept seeing the squares with their butterfly leaves just ready to fly. We met near the old haunts—Queen Anne Street—and walked in one of the little lanes and short cuts that we know so well—side by side, talking. 'Let me tie your veil,' and I stop; she ties it and we walk on again. In the Persian shop she leaned against a red and black silk curtain. She was very pale, and her black hat looked enormous, and she kept wanting to buy me 'these things—feel how soft they are', and smiling and speaking just above her breath for tiredness.

March 26 New Moon, 6h. 9m. p.m. (I didn't see it, though). Ida and I took the tram to Clapham. She left at about 9 p.m. having dressed me. When I leave her hands I feel hung with wreaths. A silly, unreal evening at Miss R.'s. Pretty rooms and pretty people, pretty coffee, and cigarettes out of a silver tankard. A sort of sham Meredith atmosphere lurking. Amber Reeves has a pert, nice face—that was all. I was wretched. I have nothing to say to 'charming' women. I feel like a cat among tigers. The ladies,

[1]It was not disturbed. Katherine did not see her mother again.

left to themselves, talked ghosts and child-beds. I am wretchedly unhappy among everybody—and the silence. . . .

March 27 J's public examination. He went off half-crying because he had not sent the urgent work that kept him all yesterday to the post. I am waiting for Ida to come. She's very late. Everything is in a state of suspense—even birds and chimneys. Frightened *in private*.

At the last moment Ida never said Good-bye at all but took the fiddle and ran. I walked away down some narrow streets; large drops of rain fell. I passed some packing warehouses, and the delicious smell of fresh wood and straw reminded me of Wellington. I could almost fancy a saw-mill. In the evening the Campbells', and the little parrot swinging on a wire.

March 28 Put my clothes in order. The crocuses in Battersea Park reminded me of autumn in Bavaria. The ground is wet, and it looks as though winter were going—the grass long and green among the trampled flowers. Birds are far more savage-looking than the wildest beasts. Thinking of a forest of *wild* birds—or if the birds 'turned' even here. I want to get alone. The *magnolia conspicua* is in bud.

March 29 J. would really think me important if I brought him £ s. d. He thinks he is far and away the first fiddle. How he'd love to boast of what I got out of a play. That's why I am going to start one to-day. I'll sweat my guts out till I bring it off, too. A hideous day.

March 30 'I am afraid you are too psychological, Mr. Temple.'[1] Then I went off and bought the bacon.

March 31 A splendid fine morning, but as I know I have to go out and change the cheque and pay the bills, I can do nothing and I feel wretched. Life is a hateful business, there's no denying it. When G. and J. were talking in the Park of physical well-being

[1]An allusion to Maurice Temple, a character in a novel I was writing at this time, called *Still Life*.

and of how they could still look forward to 'parties', I nearly groaned. And I am sure J. could get a great deal of pleasure out of pleasant society. I couldn't. I've done with it, and can't contact it at all now. I had so much rather lean idly over the bridge and watch the boats and the free, unfamiliar people and feel the wind blow. No, I hate society. The idea of the play seems perfect tripe to-day.

April 1 Spent another frightful day. Nothing helps or could help me except a person who could guess. And J. is far too absorbed in his own affairs poor dear, to ever do so. Also, he doesn't consider other people within his reach, psychologically speaking. As long as one's mood isn't directed towards or against him, he's quite unconscious and unsuspicious. Very sane, but lonely and difficult for me to understand. Saw Campbell and talked £ s. d. Went for a walk and had some vague comfort given by some children and the noise of the water like rising waves.

April 2 I have begun to sleep badly again and I've decided to tear up everything that I've written and start again. I'm sure that is best. This misery persists, and I am so tired under it. If I could write with my old fluency for *one day*, the spell would be broken. It's the continual effort—the slow building-up of my idea and then, before my eyes and out of my power, its slow dissolving.

April 3 Went for a walk by the river this evening and watched the boats. Two had red sails and one had white. The trees are budding almost before one's eyes in this warm weather—big white buds like birds on the chestnut trees, and round trees just sprinkled with green. The world is exceedingly lovely. My letter to L.M. was a great effort. She seemed somehow 'out of the running'. But then so does everybody. I feel a real horror of people closing over me. I could not *bear* them. I wish I lived on a barge, with Jack for a husband and a little boy for a son.

April 4 Won a moral victory this morning, to my great relief. Went out to spend 2s. 11d. and left it unspent. But I have never known a more hideous day. Terribly lonely. Nothing that isn't

satirical is really true for me to write just now. If I try to find things lovely, I turn pretty-pretty. And at the same time I am so frightened of writing mockery for satire that my pen hovers and won't settle. Dined with Campbells and Drey. Afterwards to Café Royal. The sheep were bleating and we set up a feeble counterpart. Saw a fight. The woman with her back to me—her arms crooked sharp at the elbows, her head thrust out, like a big bird. D. is frightened.

April 5 No bird sits a tree more proudly than a pigeon. It looks as though placed there by the Lord. The sky was silky blue and white, and the sun shone through the little leaves. But the children, pinched and crooked, made me feel a bit out of love with God. I realised last night, more than ever, when I tried to explain myself to Jack, and saw his incredulity, how profoundly I love him. Not for what I'd have him, and in spite of himself sometimes, he really is my mate. I love him to the inmost.

April 6 I went out with J. to find a shop; but instead we came to Swan Walk and passed and remarked the delightful houses, white with flowering pear-trees in the gardens and green railings and fine carved gates. I want a little house very much. I am afraid this house is haunted. At any rate C. is embedded in it like a lump of fat, and after dark the kitchen crawls. My mind is full of embroidery, but there isn't any material to hold it together or make it strong. A silly state! L.M. seems to be simply fading away I can barely remember her objectively: subjectively she is just the same.

April 7 The heavens opened for the sunset to-night. When I had thought the day folded and sealed, came a burst of heavenly bright petals. . . . I sat behind the window, pricked with rain, and looked until that hard thing in my breast melted and broke into the smallest fountain, murmuring as aforetime, and I drank the sky and the whisper. Now who is to decide between 'Let it be' and 'Force it'? J. believes in the whip: he says his steed has plenty of strength, but it is idle and shies at such a journey in prospect.

I feel, if mine does not gallop and dance at free will, I am not riding at all, but just swinging from its tail. For example, to-day... To-night he's all sparks.

We moved to two rather unpleasant top-floor rooms in Edith Grove, Chelsea, where we both had pleurisy. The Lawrences arrived from Italy in July and were indignant with me for making Katherine live in such depressing rooms.

We hunted for something better, found a charming set of rooms in Arthur Street, and were driven out of them by bugs. In mid-July we took for a fortnight a furnished cottage at Udimore, near Rye. Deaf House Agent *records one of our efforts to find a cheap cottage in the neighbourhood.*

May To-day is Sunday. It is raining a little, and the birds are cheeping. There's a smell of food and a noise of chopping cabbage.

Oh, if only I could make a celebration and do a bit of writing. I long and long to write, and the words just won't come. It's a queer business. Yet, when I read people like Gorky, for instance, I realise how streets ahead of them I be. . . .

July . . . Then I put my hand over it and felt for a latch, and then through the bars. I suppose one isn't expected to vault over it, I thought,—or to ride a bicycle up this side and dive into a fountain of real water on the other. . . .

Deaf House Agent.

That deaf old man,
With his hand to his ear.
His hand to his head stood out like a shell,
Horny and hollow. He said: 'I can't hear.'
He muttered: 'Don't shout!
I can hear very well!'
He mumbled: 'I can't catch a word.
I can't follow.'
Then Jack, with a voice like a Protestant bell,
Roared: 'Particulars. Farmhouse. At ten quid a year.'

'I dunno what place you are talking about,'
Said the deaf old man.
Said Jack: 'What the HELL!'

But the deaf old man took a pin from his desk, picked a piece of wool the size of a hen's egg from his ear, had a good look at it, decided in its favour, and replaced it in the afore-mentioned organ.

(*July.*)

To Beauty. Why should you come to-night when it is so cold and grey and when the clouds are heavy and the bees troubled in their swinging?

August 17 I simply cannot believe that there was a time when I cared about Turgeniev. Such a poseur! Such a hypocrite! It's true he was wonderfully talented, but I keep thinking what a good cinema play *On the Eve* would make.

August 30 We go to Cornwall to-morrow, I suppose, I've re-read my diary. Tell me, Is there a God? I do not trust Jack. I'm old to-night. Ah I wish I had a lover to [*illegible*] me, love me, hold me, comfort me, to stop me thinking.

After a fortnight in a furnished cottage at Merryn in Cornwall, in September we took for five shillings a week a damp and ugly cottage at The Lee, near Missenden in Buckinghamshire, a mile and a half from the Lawrences at Cholesbury.

November 3 It's full moon with a vengeance to-night. Out of the front door a field of big turnips, and beyond, a spiky wood with red bands of light behind it. Out of the back door an old tree with just a leaf or two remaining and a moon perched in the branches. I feel very deeply happy and free. Colette Willy is in my thoughts to-night. I feel in my own self awake and stretching, stretching so that I am on tip-toe, full of happy joy. Can it be that one *can* renew oneself?

Dear, dear Samuel Butler! Just you wait: I'll do you proud. To-morrow at about 10.30, I go into action.

November 15 It's very quiet. I've re-read *L'Entrave*. I suppose Colette is the only woman in France who does just this. I don't care a fig at present for anyone I know except her. But the book to be written is still unwritten. I can't sit down and fire away like Jack.

November 16 A letter from F.[1] I had not expected it, and yet, when it came, it seemed quite inevitable—the writing, the way the letters were made, his confidence, and his warm sensational life. I wish he were my friend; he's very near *me*. His personality comes right through his letters to J. and I want to laugh and run into the road.

December I have not told Jack that I have heard again from Francis. Jack is not really interested. In fact when, after that struggle, I showed him a letter which had given me such a shock, he thought it *funny* and wasn't sure that it was a love-letter. I decided that I made a fool of myself by going to Jack with 'Quelqu'un m'a donné ça.' So, though it's been hard, I've refrained.

F. may be leaving Besançon soon for the front, he told me, and he said 'Je vous aime chaque jour davantage'; and he told me that all the while we had been in Paris he had loved me. Well, he thinks so, *now*. And that he would like to love in a little hut on the edge of the world, where no one would ever come, and that at times now he has merely an awful sensation of emptiness. He would like to lie in the road and let the world pass over him 'et quand je m'endors, je vous prends dans mes bras—et j'éprouve une tristesse affreuse'—and ever so much more. The day after this letter he sent me another. . . . 'Chère Katherine, je ne veux que vous. Vous êtes et vous serez toute ma vie. Je suis. . . .'

[*The solitary page ends abruptly at this point.*]

December 18 That decides me—that frees me. I'll play this game no longer. I created the situation. Very well, I'll do the

[1]A letter from Francis Carco to me.

other thing with *moderate* care, and before it is too late. That's all. He has made me feel like a girl. I've loved, loved just like any girl,—but I'm not a girl, and these feelings are not mine. For him I am hardly anything except a gratification and a comfort. Of course, G. doesn't know me through him. He doesn't know me himself—or want to. I submit, that's true. But I'm not Colette, nor even Lesley. Jack, Jack, we are not going to stay together. I know that as well as you do. Don't be afraid of hurting me. What we have got each to kill—is my *you* and your *me*. That's all. Let's do it nicely and go to the funeral in the same carriage, and hold hands hard over the new grave, and smile and wish each other luck. I can. And so can you. Yes, I have already said Adieu to you now.

Darling, it has been lovely. We shall never forget—no, never. Goodbye! When once I have left you I will be more remote than you could imagine. I see you and G. discussing the extraordinary *time* it lasted. But I am far away, and different from what you think.

December 28 The year is nearly over. Snow has fallen, and everything is white. It is very cold. I have changed the position of my desk into a corner. Perhaps I shall be able to write far more easily here. Yes, this is a good place for the desk, because I cannot see out of the stupid window. I am quite private. The lamp stands on one corner and *in* the corner. Its rays fall on the yellow and green Indian curtain and on the strip of red embroidery. The forlorn wind scarcely breathes. I love to close my eyes a moment and think of the land outside, white under the mingled snow and moonlight—white trees, white fields—the heaps of stones by the roadside white—snow in the furrows. *Mon Dieu!* How quiet and how patient! If he were to come I could not even hear his footsteps.

1915

January 1 What a vile little diary! But I am determined to keep it this year. We saw the Old Year out and the New Year in.

A lovely night, blue and gold. The church bells were ringing. I went into the garden and opened the gate and nearly—just walked away. J. stood at the window mashing an orange in a cup. The shadow of the rose-tree lay on the grass like a tiny bouquet. The moon and the dew had put a spangle on everything. But just at 12 o'clock I thought I heard footsteps on the road and got frightened and ran back into the house. But nobody passed. J. thought I was a great baby about the whole affair. The ghost of L.M. ran through my heart, her hair flying, very pale, with dark startled eyes. And I thought of Francis. 'Déjà dans la petite pièce de l'hôtel de Cluny j'étais sûr de vous être attaché', and then 'je suis jaloux de vous comme un avare'. I live within sound of a rushing river that only I can hear. It is a curious sort of life . . . more real than this three years' idyll—more natural to that which I suppose I really am.

For this year I have two wishes: to write, to make money. Consider. With money we could go away as we liked, have a room in London, be as free as we liked, and be independent and proud with nobodies. It is only poverty that holds us so tightly. Well, J. doesn't want money and won't earn money. I must. How? First, get this book finished. That is a start. When? At the end of January. If you do that, you are saved. If I wrote night and day I could do it. Yes, I could. Right O!

I feel the new life coming nearer. I believe, just as I always have believed. Yes, it will come. All will be well.

Later. To London. It was raining and very cold. I posted my letter at the G.P.O. Saw Koteliansky. The setting was very good for a short story some time. I felt depressed and inquiète à cause de ses . . . Hardly slept at all and dreamed a terrible dream about Mother. J. read me some of his book. He must beware of a kind of melodramatic intellectual sentimentality—'a little crack'.

January 2 A horrible morning and afternoon. *Je me sens incapable de tout*, and at the same time I am *just not* writing very well. I must finish my story to-morrow. I ought to work at it all day,—yes, all day and into the night if necessary. A vile day. *J'ai envie*

de prier au bon Dieu comme le vieux père Tolstoi. Oh, Lord, make me a better creature to-morrow. *Le cœur me monte aux lèvres d'un goût de sang. Je me deteste aujourd'hui*. Dined at the Lawrences' and talked the Island.[1] It is quite real except that some part of me is blind to it. Six months ago I'd have jumped.

The chief thing I feel lately about myself is that I am getting old. I don't feel like a girl any more, or even like a young woman. I feel really quite past my prime. At times the fear of death is dreadful. I feel ever so much older than J. and that he recognises it, I am sure. He never used to, but now he often talks like a young man to an older woman. Well, perhaps, it's a good thing.

January 3 A cold, ugly day. It is dark soon after two. Spent it trying to write and running from my room into the kitchen. I could not get really warm. The day felt endless. Read in the evening, and in bed read with J. a good deal of poetry. If I lived alone I would be very dependent on poetry. Talked over the Island idea with J. For me I know it has come too late.

January 4 Woke early and saw a snowy branch across the window. It is cold, snow has fallen, and now it is thawing. The hedges and the trees are covered with beads of water. Very dark, too, with a wind somewhere. I long to be alone for a bit.

I make a vow to finish a book this month. I'll write all day and at night too, and get it finished. I *swear*. Told Jack who *understood*. But did not start that night, for we were lovers, and at 12 o'clock I was dead tired and what Anatole calls sèche. Dreamed of Lilian Shelley's legs.

January 5 Saw the sun rise. A lovely apricot sky with flames in it and then a solemn pink. Heavens, how beautiful! I heard a knocking, and went downstairs. It was Benny cutting away the ivy. Over the path lay the fallen nests—wisps of hay and feathers. He looked like an ivy bush himself. I made early tea and carried it up to J., who lay half awake with crinkled eyes. I feel so full of love to-day after having seen the sun rise.

[1]A plan of making a settlement in some remote island. It was probably of the same order of seriousness as Coleridge's pantisocratic colony on the Susquehannah.

Evening Have written a good deal. He is very near to-day. I suppose he has got my letter, for I keep thrilling to the thought of him.

January 6 A letter, rather two. We went to London. I took the letters. He has haunted me all day. I have seen for him and with him all day long. As I went to Piccadilly in the evening on top of a bus I nearly got up and called out his name, I longed for him so, and yet I dare not push my thoughts as far as they will go. Had my hair washed and hands done. Went to Hippodrome. The audience —their heads and hands—were the only things worth watching. In the gloom, they seemed so remote, so infallible in movement. Went to Pantomime. Very interesting. Began to think of Panto tradition. Would like to write on it. Had my photo taken for him.

January 7 Out with J. in the morning. A wet day. Saw a cinema in the afternoon. Tea with Kot at the Russian Law Bureau. He was quiet and unhappy. He cut his finger. There was something very desperate about him. Jack sat and plucked his fingers. On the way home in the carriage he put his hand in my muff, and *the other* was between us. I started talking about Love. How sensible Jack was! Yes, I love Jack, but all the while my heart says, 'To late! Too late! Adieu!' I know I shall go. I thought of him all day again. Mrs. Hearn had made the house clean and nice. Dreamed of L.M.

January 8 Had letter from L.M. She has been ill. Mother a letter this morning. (Oh God, a train is passing!) Will sit up all night and work. It is windy, dark, and soul-killing sunless weather. He is like poison in my blood. J. and I were lovers after supper in my room. I nearly 'cut across his line of male' by talking of F.[1] After, I worked and wasted time and went to bed wretched with myself. It was terribly cold. J. interrupted me all day with my work. I did practically nothing. Wrote and sent a piece of my hair.

[1]To 'cut across his line of male' was a frequent phrase of Lawrence's.

January 9 J. went to town. I worked a little, chased the fowls. One brown fowl refused to leave the garden. Long after it *knew* there was no gap in the wire-netting, it kept on running up and down. I must not forget that nor how cold it was, nor how the mud coated my thin shoes. In the evening Lawrence and Koteliansky. They talked plans; but I felt *very* antagonistic to the whole affair. After they had gone, Jack and I lay in bed, deeply in love, strangely in love. Everything made plain between us. It was very wonderful. We gave each other our freedom in a strange way. I had such a longing to kiss Jack and say 'Goodbye, Love!' I don't know why exactly. I pressed his cheek against mine and he felt small, and I felt an anguish of love. Then I said suddenly 'what are you thinking?' and he said 'I was thinking that you had gone away and Campbell and Frieda came to tell me', and I was not a bit upset or surprised. (When Lawrence mentioned F.'s name by chance to-night it cut me like a knife.)

January 10 Windy and dark. In the morning, Frieda suddenly. She had had a row with Lawrence. She tired me to death. At night we went to the Lawrences', leaving her here. It was a warm night with big drops of rain falling. I didn't mind the going, but the coming back was rather awful. I was unwell, and tired, and my heart could scarcely beat. But we made up a song to keep going. The rain splashed up to my knees, and I was frightened. L. was nice, very nice, sitting with a piece of string in his hand, on true sex.

January 11 No letter. I had counted on one. I got up in the dark to be ready for my little maid and watched the dawn coming. It wasn't up to much, though. I am wretched. It is a bright, winking day. Oh God, my God, let me work!

Wasted! Wasted!

January 12 Quarrelled with J. in bed. A *letter* written in pencil, when he was wet to the skin. I have sent an answer to-day—rather, written it. Now I can get on. I am determined to take a flat in Surrey Lodge. Have been in more of a state of virtue to-

day. Actually finished the story, *Brave Love*,[1] and I don't know what to think of it even now. Read it to J., who was also puzzled. Violent headache, but rather happy.

January 13 Sent it. From to-day J. has got his own room. The coal has come. I set great store by that. (So far my little maid is simply excellent.) A vile misty day with a cold wind.

January 14 I had a letter from F. asking me to come—the most wonderful letter he has ever sent me. I carried it with me to London. I thought of nothing else all day; it tired me out and refreshed me and then I was tired again. Saw Palliser and saw Gordon. The day was far too short. Bought J.'s banjo. Came home in the carriage. I imagined he was with me. Yes, I was in love all the day long and in the night too, and tired out. J. kicked the banjo.

January 15 Heard from Lesley and Lawrence. To-day it was worse. A tremendous wind blew. The sky was like zinc. I tried to write to him, but my letter broke the bounds of my letters and I couldn't. So I told J. a *little*. In the evening we went to the Lawrences'. Frieda was rather nice. I had a difficulty in not telling her, so dreadful did I feel. Came home busy and tired with thought, but could not work, so went to bed immediately and dreamed of N.Z. Heard from Clayton.

January 16 *A letter*. He has left Bésançon. O God, let me work to-day. It's all I beg. I must write to-day and post it. He has my money. Raining and fuming with wind as usual. A dreadful depressing day. My hands are like ice. (And now Jack has gone to Chesham, and Rose has taken his letter to the post.) Now, ah bless! I am alone for a little. I can write. What shall I write? What is there to say? Just to somehow—to tell him that I love him and that I am his for life. That is all there is to say. If I stop loving him before the year is out, what shall I do with his book? I do not mean to stop loving it. I mean if our love should be wounded and

[1]Of this story only the opening pages survive.

should die, or be lost and taken prisoner. When I think of him at the front, I am simply numb. It has no meaning for me at all. When we were waiting for tea, Gordon came—we were glad. A moment when we were alone, Gordon asked about him. Jack was in the kitchen cooking. I felt bitterly ashamed. Walked to Lawrences'! They were horrible and witless and dull.

January 17 A fine day. Went for a walk and saw some plovers in a field. But the wind was dreadful. I could have walked a million miles. Yesterday I read Gordon *Brave Love*. He gave me an enormous kick about my work. I was far away from J. all day with the other. At night we were lovers in his room, when I shut my eyes and leaned my cheek against his for a moment and *dreamed*. It was horrible. I feel I betrayed F. and slept hardly at all. (Jack told me about Queenie.)

January 18 MSS, and letter from Cook's. It is morning and a new week. I have my work to do. I am very unhappy. Life feels so poor. I tried to write, but it came scrappy and dreamy. All day I was possessed by hate of England. It is, after him, my one passion—a loathing for England. At night we took the fur rug down in front of the fire, and I tried, quite vainly, to forget. I told Jack a lot about him. Jack was rather amused than otherwise. He said he would have to tell Gordon!

January 19 No letter. The morning a sheer waste. Got on slowly with *Cinema*, but badly. Sat on the divan and *saw* rather than wrote. Still it all was better. Lawrences to dinner. They came late. Jack made a currant pudding. Lawrence arrived cross, but he gradually worked round to me. We talked of the war and its horrors. I have simply felt it closing in on me and my unhappy love, and all to no purpose. Wrote to him just a little note. Jack was horrid at times.

January 20 A man outside is breaking stones. The day is utterly quiet. Sometimes a leaf rustles and a strange puff of wind passes the window. The old man chops, chops, as though it were

a heart beating out there. I waited for the post as of old to-day—but no letter.

In the afternoon there came a violent storm, but we walked over to the Cannans', dined with them and the Lawrences and the Smiths and had a play after. Late we went to the L.s' to sleep; very untidy—newspapers and faded mistletoe. I hardly slept at all, but it was nice.

January 21 A stormy day. We walked back this morning. J. told me a dream. We quarrelled all the way home more or less. It has rained and snowed and hailed and the wind blows. The dog at the inn howls. A man far away is playing the bugle. I have read and sewed to-day, but not written a word. I want to to-night. It is so funny to sit quietly sewing, while my heart is never for a moment still. I am dreadfully tired in head and body. This sad place is killing me. I live upon old made-up dreams; but they do not deceive either of us.

Later I am in the sitting-room downstairs. The wind howls outside, but here it is so warm and pleasant. It looks like a real room where real people have lived. My sewing-basket is on the table: under the bookcase are poked J.'s old house shoes. The black chair, half in shadow, looks as if a happy person had sprawled there. We had roast mutton and onion sauce and baked rice for dinner. It *sounds* right. I have run the ribbons through my under-clothes with a hairpin in the good home way. But my anxious heart is eating up my body, eating up my nerves, eating up my brain, now slowly, now at tremendous speed. I feel this poison slowly filling my veins—every particle becoming slowly tainted. Yes, love like this is a malady, a fever, a storm. It is almost like hate, one is so hot with it—and am never, never calm, never for an instant. I remember years ago saying I wished I were one of those happy people who can suffer so far and then collapse or become exhausted. But I am just the opposite. The more I suffer, the more of fiery energy I feel to bear it. Darling! Darling!

January 22 No letter. Weather worse than ever culminating

at tea-time when I surprised myself by breaking down. I simply felt for a moment overcome with anguish and came upstairs and put my head on the black cushion. After that I deliberately drugged myself with Jack and made it the more bearable by talking French. In the evening, read and pretended to write, but did not write a line worth a 1d. Re-read *Jésus-la-Caille*. My longing for cities engulfs me.

January 23 No letter. The old man breaking stones is here again. A thick white mist reaches the edge of the field. I have spent hours waiting for the post. [*Later*] Jack went to Chesham. I did nothing. After tea Rose went out and came back with a *letter* and a photograph. I came up here, and simply felt my whole body go out to him as if the sun had suddenly filled a room, warm and lovely. He called me 'ma petite chérie'—my little darling. O God, save me from this war and let us see each other soon. I talked with Jack, playing with the fringe of his lamp. But he refused to take it at all seriously. The dinner was good—the fire burned. The rain stopped. I sat after in the corner by the fire on a black pillow and dreamed. His photograph I put in the corner of the landscape [*three words illegible*] against a wattle-tree, his hands in his pockets.

January 24 Washed my hair and worked and read a little. In the evening came the Smiths—a pleasant little pair, if only just something in him did not remind me of Bowden. Jack was nice to them. They were 1,000,000 miles away. After, J. talked to me of the early days. Yes, it is all in the past. It was a rainy indefinite day, a silly spidery sort of day, not worth seeing.

January 26 Went to London. We found Beatrice Campbell had arrived; so Drey put us up. D.'s flat looked lovely to me. Had tea at the Criterion with Campbell and Drey. Had my hands done. In the evening went to the Oxford and saw Marie Lloyd, who was very good. Slept on the big divan in Anne's room. In the afternoon it was very foggy in London; but the relief to be there was simply immense.

January 27 To Chancery Lane with J. To the Bank. Saw in the Strand a man in a blue coat who walked like F. I can't get him out of my mind. Met a woman who'd been in the cinema with me —her pink roses in her belt, and hollow lovely eyes and battered hair. I shall not forget her. *No, no.* She was wonderful.[1] Kot for lunch, at the Dieppe Café among the singing canaries. Posted F. my photograph. Had supper with Kot and went to the Pavilion after. Mlle. Dewanter (?) sang. She is very good.

January 28 *A letter.* He is as wretched as I. I wrote and posted to him at this new address. I read and re-read the letter till it was all crumpled. Bridget half ate it in her mouth. I loved her for that. She is the only person who has come anywhere near us just like that. I sat on the sofa and watched her little hands crunching the letter and felt she understood all about us and found us delicious. I went to dinner and to the Chelsea Palace.

January 29 A cold day. Still at Dreys'. Looked for rooms all the morning but found none. Lunched with Jack and then met Drey and went to Curtis Brown. He was nice, but I felt so extremely ugly that I couldn't even be intelligent. But I like him and the woman there too. Campbells' again. *Dadda! Hallo!* Saw Koteliansky at the station. He was very nice. I rather cling to him. He brought me a skirt and some cigarettes and some chocolates. [*two words illegible*] house with fire and a drive in milky moonlight.

January 31 Jack rode over to Mary's to get my book. I read all day. I felt rather ill. It came on to rain in the evening and the wind was furious. We talked of London. Jack understands that I want to live there, and apart from him. It is true. I felt quite impotent to write all day, and I read and smoked—feeling ill physically a bit and dreadfully ugly. I shall not speak of him.

February 1 No letter. I had expected one. A slight attack of 'flu' is bowling me over. There is a glimpse of sun. The trees look as though they were hanging out to dry.

[1]She was, probably, the original of Miss Moss in '*Pictures*'. In 1913 Katherine had acted as a super in a few cinematograph productions.

My cold gained on me all day. I read *The Lonely Nietzsche*; but I felt a bit ashamed of my feelings for this man in the past. He is, if you like, 'human, all too human.' Read until late. I felt wretched simply beyond words. Life was like sawdust and sand. Talked short stories to Jack.

February 2 A letter. He is very unhappy. His letter did not bring us nearer, but I feel a bit more cheerful to-day because I don't look quite so revolting as I have done.

No, the day ended in being as bad as ever. For one thing my illness is really severe and I am worried beyond endurance by the time that letters take, and by the silence. I have been embroidering my kimono with black wool. Bah! What rot! What do I care for such rubbish! Francis! Francis! I cannot stand the war any longer.

February 3 A cold day with a strong wind. I can do nothing. Have tidied my desk and drunk some quinine and that's all. But I know I shall go, because otherwise I'll die of despair. My head is so hot, but my hands are cold. Perhaps I am *dead* and just pretending to live here. There is, at any rate, no sign of life in me. I can't write to F. either. I want another, a warmer letter.

February 4 To-day the sun began to shine, and my cold is better: only my cough remains. Gilbert and Mary [Cannan] came to tea and supper. Mary looked very sweet, but we were dull. Rose did everything very well. I sent her in the afternoon to beg a letter for me from the post, but none came. I feel anxious.

Finished *Crime and Punishment*. Very bad I thought it, too.

February 5 *A letter*. It is morning. The trees are [*illegible*] through the green hills. Far away a dog barks. It's still and clear. And a little photograph—very like. God! I am happy!! Now to read it again.

February 6 To-day I had an urgent letter. He had just got my photograph. And he wants me to come immediately. This is going to be a very difficult business. I can see that.

February 15 Went to London with J.

February 16 Came to Paris.

February 19 Came to Gray.

An unposted letter to Frieda Lawrence written in the diary.

February 20 England is like a dream. I am sitting at the window of a little square room furnished with a bed, a wax apple, and an immense flowery clock. Outside the window there is a garden full of wall flowers and blue enamel saucepans. The clocks are striking five and the last rays of sun pour under the swinging blind. It is very hot—the kind of heat that makes one's cheek burn in infancy. But I am so happy I must just send you a word on a spare page of my diary, dear.

I have had some dreadful adventures on my way here because the place is within the zone of the armies and not allowed to women. The last old Pa-man who saw my passport, 'M. le Colonel', very grand with a black tea-cosy and gold tassel on his head, and smoking what lady novelists call a 'heavy Egyptian cigarette', nearly sent me back.

But, my dear, it's such wonderful country—all rivers and woods and large birds that look blue in the sunlight. I keep thinking of you and L. The French soldiers are *pour rire*. Even when they are wounded they seem to lean out of their sheds and wave their bandages at the train. But I saw some prisoners to-day—not at all funny. Oh, I have so much to tell you I'd better not begin. We shall see each other some day, won't we, darling?

Voilà le petit soldat joyeux et jeune! He has been delivering letters. It is as hot as summer. One only sits and laughs.

Your loving

Katherine.

An unposted letter to J.M.M.

I seem to have just escaped the prison cell, J. dearest,—because I find this place is in the zone of the armies and therefore forbidden

to women. However, my Aunt's illness pulled me through. I had some really awful moments. Outside the station he was waiting. He merely *sang* (so typical) 'Follow me, but not as though you were doing so' until we came to a tiny toll-house by the river, against which leant a faded cab. But once fed with my suit-case and our two selves, it dashed off like the wind, the door opening and shutting, to his horror, as he is not allowed in cabs. We drove to a village near by, to a large white house where he had taken a room for me—a most extraordinary room furnished with a bed, a wax apple and an immense flowery clock. It's very hot. The sun streams through the blind. The garden outside is full of wall-flowers and blue enamel saucepans. It would make you laugh, too. . . .

The Journal continues.

February 20 I am waiting for my déjeuner. Beside me on a chair is a thick leather belt and his sword. He left at nearly eight o'clock. I am just up. It is a quite clear day. My heart feels rather heavy. I've got a feeling about this prison business which frightens me. I can't bear to think of him in prison—and another feeling, very profound, that he does not love me at all. I find him wonderful. I don't really love him now I know him—but he is so rich and so careless—*that* I love.

We spent a queer night. The room—the room. The little lamp. The wooden ceiling. The bouquets of pink daisies that unfolded at dawn. The picture of a man bringing the rabbit. And F. quite naked making up the fire with a tiny brass poker—so natural and so beautiful. F. again dressing *en petit soldat*. His shirt, knickers, socks, little tie, jersey, black puttees, jacket. Washing—and brushing his hair with my ivory hair-brush. And then just for a moment I saw him passing the window—and then he was gone. That is a terrible moment for a woman.

The curious thing was that I could not concentrate on the end of the journey. I simply felt so happy that I leaned out of the window with my arms along the brass rail and my feet crossed and [*illegible*] the sunlight and the wonderful country unfolding. At Château-

dun where we had to change I went to the Buffet to drink. A big pale green room with a large stove jutting out and a buffet with coloured bottles. Two women, their arms folded, leaned against the counter. A little boy, very pale, swung from table to table, taking the orders. It was full of soldiers sitting back in their chairs, swinging their legs and eating. The sun shone through the windows.

The little boy poured me out a glass of horrible black coffee. He served the soldiers with a kind of dreary contempt. In the porch an old man carried a pail of brown spotted fish—large fish, like the fish one sees in glass cases swimming through forests of beautiful pressed seaweed. The soldiers laughed and slapped each other. They tramped about in their heavy boots. The women looked after them, and the old man stood humbly waiting for someone to attend to him, his cap in his hands, as if he knew that the life he represented in his torn jacket, with his basket of fish—his peaceful occupation—did not exist any more and had no right to thrust itself here.

The last moments of the journey I was very frightened. We arrived at Gray, and one by one, like women going in to see a doctor, we slipped through a door into a hot room completely filled with two tables and two colonels, like colonels in comic opera, big shiny grey-whiskered men with a touch of burnt-red in their cheeks, both smoking, one a cigarette with a long curly ash hanging from it. He had a ring on his finger. Sumptuous and omnipotent he looked. I shut my teeth. I kept my fingers from trembling as I handed the passport and the ticket.

'It won't do, it won't do at all,' said my colonel, and looked at me for what seemed an age in silence. His eyes were like two grey stones. He took my passport to the other colonel, who dismissed the objection, stamped it, and let me go. I nearly knelt on the floor.

By the station stood F., terribly pale. He saluted and smiled and said, 'Turn to the right and follow me as though you were not following.' Then fast he went towards the Suspension Bridge. He had a postman's bag on his back, and a paper parcel. The

street was very muddy. From the toll house by the bridge a scraggy woman, her hands wrapped in a shawl, peered out at us. Against the toll house leaned a faded cab. 'Montez! vite, vite!' said F. He threw my suit-case, his letter bag and the parcel on to the floor. The driver sprang into activity, lashed the bony horse, and we tore away with both doors flapping and banging. 'Bon jour, ma chérie', said F. and we kissed each other quickly and then clutched at the banging doors. They would not keep shut, and F. who is not supposed to ride in cabs, had to try to hide. Soldiers passed all the time. At the barracks he stopped a moment and a crowd of faces blocked the window. 'Prends ça, mon vieux,' said F., handing over the paper parcel.

Off we flew again. By a river. Down a long strange white street with houses on either side, very gay and bright in the late sunlight. F. put his arm round me. 'I know you will like the house. It's quite white, and so is the room, and the people are, too.'

At last we arrived. The woman of the house, with a serious baby in her arms, came to the door.

'It is all right?'

'Yes, all right. Bonjour, Madame.'

It was like an elopement.

We went into a room on the ground floor, and the door was shut. Down went the suitcase, the letter bag, [*illegible*] again. Laughing and trembling we pressed against each other—a long long kiss, interrupted by a clock on the wall striking five. He lit the fire. We stayed together a little, but always laughing. The whole affair seemed somehow so ridiculous, and at the same time so utterly natural. There was nothing to do but laugh.

Then he left me for a moment. I brushed my hair and washed and was ready when he came back to go out to dinner. The wounded were creeping down the hill. They were all bandaged up. One man looked as though he had two red carnations over his ears; one man as though his hand was covered in black sealing-wax. F. talked and talked and talked. 'When I was little I thought the sun was the most terrible thing in the world, but now it is quite pale.' [*An illegible sentence.*]

Then the long, long dinner. I hardly said a word. When we came out, stars were shining, through wispy clouds, and a moon hung like a candle-flame. There was a tiny lamp on the table; the fire flickered on the white wood ceiling. It was as though we were on a boat. We talked in whispers, overcome by this discreet little lamp. In the most natural manner we slowly undressed by the stove. F. slung into bed. 'Is it cold?' I said. 'Ah, no, not at all cold. Viens, ma bébé. Don't be frightened. The waves are quite small.' With his laughing face, his pretty hair, one hand with a bangle over the sheets, he looked like a girl. [*illegible*]

The sword, the big ugly sword, but not between us, lying in a chair. The act of love seemed somehow quite incidental, we talked so much. It was so warm and delicious, lying curled in each other's arms, by the light of the tiny lamp—*le fils de Maeterlinck*—only the clock and the fire to be heard. A whole life passed in thought. Other people, other things. But we lay like two old people coughing faintly under the eiderdown and laughing at each other. We went to India, to South America, to Marseilles in the white boat, and then we talked of Paris. And sometimes I lost him in a crowd of people; and it was dark, and then he was in my arms again, and we were kissing. (Here he is. I know his steps.)

I remember how he talked of the sea in his childhood—how clear it was—how he used to lean over the pier and watch it and the fish and shells gleaming—and then his story: 'Le lapin blanc.' At last the day came and birds sang, and again I saw the pink marguerites on the wall. He was *très paresseux*, he lay on his stomach, and would not get up. Finally,—one, two, three—and then he shivered and felt ill and had fever and a sore throat and shivers. All the same, he washed scrupulously and dressed, and at last I had the blue and red vision again—dors mon bébé—and then a blurred impression of him through the blind.

I did not feel happy again until I had been to the *cabinet* and seen the immense, ridiculous rabbits. By the time he came at 12.30. I felt awfully happy. We went off to lunch at the same little restaurant, and had eggs we dipped the bread in, and pears and oranges. The soldiers there. The garden full of empty bottles.

The little boy—the same boy who had smoked the long cigarette the night before.

(It has just struck three. He cannot be here before five.)

Katherine Mansfield returned disillusioned to England at the end of February and left for Paris once more in March, and again in May.

March 18 Came to Paris again.

March 19 In Paris.

March 24 Kick off.

March Cet héros aux cheveux longs qui, pendant des heures entières, gratte avec sa canne dans le sable; or, ayant besoin de vivre, crache un peu de sang, et, avec un long regard larmoyant mais satisfait, écrit le mot *Finis* sur le même sable gratté.

'Perhaps it is only upon the approach of an outside soul that another's soul becomes invisible, and if she be caught unawares she will not have time to disappear' (*Leon Shestov*).
That is what Tchehov aimed at.

'Sooner or later in all probability this habit will be abandoned. In the future, probably, writers will convince themselves and the public that any kind of artificial completion is absolutely superfluous' (*Leon Shestov*).
Tchehov said so.

Sunday, May 16 *Paris.* I did not tell you that I dreamed all night of Rupert Brooke. And to-day as I left the house he was standing at the door, with a rucksack on his back and his broad hat shading his face. So after I had posted J.'s letter I did not go home. I went a long, very idle sort of amble along the quais. It was exquisitely hot: white clouds lay upon the sky like sheets spread out to dry. On the big sandheaps down by the river children had hollowed out tunnels and caverns. They sat in them, stolid and content, their hair glistening in the sun. Now and then

a man lay stretched on his face, his head in his arms. The river was full of big silver stars; the trees shook faintly, glinting with light. I found delightful places—little squares with white square houses. Quite hollow they looked, with the windows gaping open. Narrow streets arched over with chestnut boughs, or perhaps quite deserted, with a clock tower showing over the roofs. The sun put a spell on everything.

I crossed and recrossed the river and leaned over the bridges and kept thinking we were coming to a park when we weren't. You cannot think what a pleasure my invisible, imaginary companion gave me. If he had been alive it would never have possibly occurred; but—it's a game I like to play—to walk and talk with the dead who smile and are silent, and *free*, quite finally free. When I lived alone, I would often come home, put my key in the door, and find someone there waiting for me. 'Hullo! Have you been here long?'

I suppose that sounds dreadful rubbish.

Notre Dame.

I am sitting on a broad bench in the sun hard by Notre Dame. In front of me there is a hedge of ivy. An old man walks along with a basket on his arm, picking off the withered leaves. In the priests' garden they are cutting the grass. I love this big cathedral. The little view I have of it now is of pointed narrow spires, fretted against the blue, and one or two squatting stone parrots balanced on a little balcony. It is like a pen-drawing by a Bogey. And I like the saints with their crowns on their collars and their heads in their hands.

Like the old saints in some cathedral, *décollés*, but with their crowns hanging over their collars.

The 'Life' of Life.

I bought a book by Henry James yesterday and read it, as they say, 'until far into the night'. It was not very interesting or very good, but I can wade through pages and pages of dull, turgid James for the sake of that sudden sweet shock, that violent throb

of delight that he gives me at times. I don't doubt this is genius: only there is an extraordinary amount of pan and an amazing *raffiné* flash—

One thing I want to annotate. His hero, Bernard Longueville, brilliant, rich, dark, agile, etc., though a witty companion, is perhaps wittiest and most amused when he is alone, and preserves his best things for himself. . . . All the attributive adjectives apart I am witty, I know, and a good companion—but I feel my case is exactly like his—the amount of minute and delicate joy I get out of watching people and things when I am alone is simply enormous—I really only have 'perfect fun' with myself. When I see a little girl running by on her heels like a fowl in the wet, and say 'My dear, there's a Gertie,' I laugh and enjoy it as I never would with anybody. Just the same applies to my feeling for what is called 'nature'. Other people won't stop and look at the things I want to look at, or, if they do, they stop to please me or to humour me or to keep the peace. But I am so made that as *soon* as I am with anyone, I begin to give consideration to their opinions and their desires, and they are not worth half the consideration that mine are. I don't miss J. at all now—I don't want to go home, I feel quite content to live here, in a furnished room, and watch. It's a pure question of weather, that's what I believe. (A *terrific* Gertie has just passed.) Life with other people becomes a blur: it does with J., but it's enormously valuable, and marvellous when I'm alone, the detail of life, the *life* of life.

Père de famille.

This family began very modest with Mamma, extremely fat, with a black moustache and a little round toque covered with poached pansies, and the baby boy, bursting out of an English tweed suit that was intended for a Norfolk, but denied its country at the second seam. They had barely settled in their places and pinched every separate piece of bread in the basket and chosen the crustiest when two young men in pale blue uniforms, with about as much moustache as mother, appeared at the doorway of the restaurant and were hailed with every appearance of enthusiasm

by sonny, who waved a serviette about the size of a single bed sheet at them. Mother was embraced; they sat down side by side and were presently joined by an unfortunate over-grown boy whose complexion had enjoyed every possible form of *Frühlings-erwachen* and who looked as though he spent his nights under an eiderdown eating chocolate biscuits with the window shut and reading *L'Histoire des Petits Pantalons pas tout à fait fermés.*

Five single bed sheets were tucked into five collars—five pairs of eyes roamed over the menu.

Suddenly with a cry of delight up flew Mamma's arms—up flew sonny's—the two young soldiers sprang to their feet, the étudiant came out in no end of a perspiration as a stout florid man appeared, and walked towards them. The waitress hovered round the table, delighted beyond words at this exhibition of vie de famille. She felt like their own bonne—she felt she had known them for years. Heaven knows what memories she had of taking M. Roué his hot water, of being found by M. Paul, looking for his shirt stud on his bedroom floor, on her charming little hands and her still more delicious knees!

May (?) I wrote twice that I should return on Tuesday. I nearly told the concierge. I was half ready. To-day it does not seem to matter. Perhaps the fact that Jack never says once that he longs for me, is desolate without me, never calls me. . . . He has been to me the being that in a solitary world held my hand, and I his—was real among shadows, and ready to laugh and to run. But to-night he is not quite so real. Pour sûr, he is very well without me. My impatience and ma douleur must seem exaggerated to him. Shall I go back? It depends entirely on him. I will not write so often or so much. I have been a little absurd.

(This old habit of 'jotting' has come back.)

Femme Seule.

Hope! you misery, you sentimental faded female. Break your last string and have done with it. I shall go mad with your monotonous plucking. My heart throbs to it; every little pulse beats in time.

It is morning. I lie in the empty bed—the huge bed—big as a field, and as cold and unsheltered. Through the shutters the sunlight comes up from the river and flows over the ceiling in trembling waves. From outside comes the noise of a hammer tapping, and down below in the house a door opens and shuts. But all about me I hear the solitude spinning her web.

Is this my room? Are these my clothes folded on an armchair?

Under the pillow—sign and seal of a lonely woman—ticks my watch.

The bell jangles. Ah, at last. I leap out of bed and run to the door in my chemise.

Voici votre lait, Madame! says the concierge gazing severely at my knees.

Merci bien, Madame! I cry, smiling gaily, and swinging the milk bottle. Pas de poste pour moi?

Rien, Madame!

Shut the door. Stand in the hall a moment, Listen, listen—for her hated twanging. I implore her once again to play you that charming little thing for one note only—coax her, court her.

After some weeks in rooms in Elgin Crescent, in July we took a house at No. 5 Acacia Road, St. John's Wood. Here Katherine Mansfield's brother, Leslie Heron Beauchamp (Chummie), came to stay with her for a week before going to the front at the end of September. He was killed almost immediately, on October 7. The following entry is a record of one of their conversations together.

Evening.

October They are walking up and down the garden in Acacia Road. It is dusky; the Michaelmas daisies are bright as feathers. From the old fruit-tree at the bottom of the garden—the slender tree rather like a poplar—there falls a little round pear, hard as a stone.

'Did you hear that, Katie! Can you find it? By Jove—that familiar sound.'

Their hands move over the thin moist grass. He picks it up, and, unconsciously, as of old, polishes it on his handkerchief.

'Do you remember the enormous number of pears there used to be on that old tree?'

'Down by the violet bed.'

'And how after there'd been a Southerly Buster we used to go out with clothes baskets to pick them up?'

'And how while we stooped they went on falling, bouncing on our backs and heads?'

'And how far they used to be scattered, ever so far, under the violet leaves, down the steps, right down to the lily-lawn? We used to find them trodden in the grass. And how soon the ants got to them. I can see now that little round hole with a sort of fringe of brown pepper round it.'

'Do you know that I've never seen pears like them since?'

'They were so bright, canary yellow—and small. And the peel was so thin and the pips jet—jet black. First you pulled out the little stem and sucked it. It was faintly sour, and then you ate them always from the top—core and all.'

'The pips were delicious.'

'Do you remember sitting on the pink garden seat?'

'I shall never forget that pink garden seat. It is the only garden seat for me. Where is it now? Do you think we shall be allowed to sit on it in Heaven?'

'It always wobbled a bit and there were usually the marks of a snail on it.'

'Sitting on that seat, swinging our legs and eating the pears—'

'But isn't it extraordinary how *deep* our happiness was—how positive—deep, shining, warm. I remember the way we used to look at each other and smile—do you?—sharing a secret. . . . What was it?'

'I think it was the family feeling—we were almost like one child. I always see us walking about together, looking at things together with the same eyes, discussing. . . . I felt that again—just now—when we looked for the pear in the grass. I remembered ruffling the violet leaves with you—Oh, that garden!'

'Do you remember that some of the pears we found used to have little teeth marks in them?'

'Yes.'

'Who bit them?'

'It was always a mystery.'

He puts his arm round her. They pace up and down. And the round moon shines over the pear tree, and the ivy walls of the garden glitter like metal. The air smells chill . . . heavy . . . very cold.

'We shall go back there one day—when it's all over.'

'We'll go back together.'

'And find everything—'

'Everything!'

She leans against his shoulder. The moonlight deepens. Now they are facing the back of the house. A square of light shows in the window.

'Give me your hand. You know I shall always be a stranger here.'

'Yes, darling, I know.'

'Walk up and down once more and then we'll go in.'

'It's so curious—my absolute confidence that I'll come back. I feel it's as certain as this pear.'

'I feel that too.'

'I couldn't not come back. You know that feeling. It's awfully mysterious.'

The shadows on the grass are long and strange; a puff of strange wind whispers in the ivy and the old moon touches them with silver.

She shivers.

'You're cold.'

'Dreadfully cold.'

He puts his arm round her. Suddenly he kisses her—

'Good-bye, darling.'

'Ah, why do you say that!'

'Darling, good-bye . . . good-bye!'

October 29 Awake, awake! my little boy. A misty, misty evening. I want to write down the fact that not only am I not

afraid of death—I welcome the idea of death. I believe in immortality because he is not here, and I long to join him. First, my darling, I've got things to do for both of us, and then I will come as quickly as I can. Dearest heart, I know you are there, and I live with you, and I will write for you. Other people are near, but they are not close to me. To you only do I belong, just as *you* belong to me. Nobody knows how often I am with you. Indeed, I am always with you, and I begin to feel that *you* know—that when I leave this house and this place it will be with you, and I will never even for the shortest space of time be away from you again. You know I can never be Jack's lover again. You have me. You're in my flesh as well as in my soul. I give Jack my 'surplus' love, but to you I hold and to you I give my deepest love. Jack is no more than . . . anybody might be.

The Apple-Tree.

There were two orchards belonging to the old house. One, that we called the 'wild' orchard, lay beyond the vegetable garden; it was planted with bitter cherries and damsons and transparent yellow plums. For some reason it lay under a cloud; we never played there, we did not even trouble to pick up the fallen fruit; and there, every Monday morning, to the round open space in the middle, the servant girl and the washer-woman carried the wet linen—grandmother's nightdresses, father's striped shirts, the hired man's cotton trousers and the servant girl's 'dreadfully vulgar' salmon-pink flannelette drawers jigged and slapped in horrid familiarity.

But the other orchard, far away and hidden from the house, lay at the foot of a little hill and stretched right over to the edge of the paddocks—to the clumps of wattles bobbing yellow in the bright sun and the blue gums with their streaming sickle-shaped leaves. There, under the fruit trees, the grass grew so thick and coarse that it tangled and knotted in your shoes as you walked, and even on the hottest day it was damp to touch when you stopped and parted it this way and that, looking for windfalls—the apples marked with a bird's beak, the big bruised pears, the quinces, so

good to eat with a pinch of salt, but so delicious to smell that you could not bite for sniffing. . . .

One year the orchard had its Forbidden Tree. It was an apple-tree discovered by father and a friend during an after-dinner prowl one Sunday afternoon.

'Great Scott!' said the friend, lighting upon it with every appearance of admiring astonishment: 'Isn't that a ——?' And a rich, splendid name settled like an unknown bird on the tree.

'Yes, I believe it is,' said father lightly. He knew nothing whatever about the names of fruit trees.

'Great Scott!' said the friend again: 'They're wonderful apples. Nothing like 'em—and you're going to have a tip-top crop. Marvellous apples! You can't beat 'em!'

'No, they're very fine—very fine,' said father carelessly, but looking upon the tree with new and lively interest.

'They're rare—they're very rare. Hardly ever see 'em in England nowadays,' said the visitor and set a seal on father's delight. For father was a self-made man and the price he had to pay for everything was so huge and so painful that nothing rang so sweet to him as to hear his purchase praised. He was young and sensitive still. He still wondered whether in the deepest sense he got his money's worth. He still had hours when he walked up and down in the moonlight half deciding to 'chuck this confounded rushing to the office every day—and clear out—clear out once and for all.' And now to discover that he'd a valuable apple-tree thrown in with the orchard—an apple-tree that this Johnny from England positively envied!

'Don't touch that tree! Do you hear me, children!' said he, bland and firm; and when the guest had gone, with quite another voice and manner:

'If I catch either of you touching those apples you shall not only go to bed—you shall each have a good sound whipping.' Which merely added to its magnificence.

Every Sunday morning after church father, with Bogey and me tailing after, walked through the flower garden, down the violet path, past the lace-bark tree, past the white rose and syringa

bushes, and down the hill to the orchard. The apple-tree—like the Virgin Mary—seemed to have been miraculously warned of its high honour, standing apart from its fellows, bending a little under its clusters, fluttering its polished leaves, important and exquisite before father's awful eye. His heart swelled to the sight—we knew his heart swelled. He put his hands behind his back and screwed up his eyes in the way he had. There it stood—the accidental thing—the thing that no one had been aware of when the hard bargain was driven. It hadn't been counted in, hadn't in a way been paid for. If the house had been burned to the ground at that time it would have meant less to him than the destruction of his tree. And how we played up to him, Bogey and I,—Bogey with his scratched knees pressed together, his hands behind his back, too, and a round cap on his head with 'H.M.S. Thunderbolt' printed across it.

The apples turned from pale green to yellow; then they had deep pink stripes painted on them, and then the pink melted all over the yellow, reddened, and spread into a fine clear crimson.

At last the day came when father took out of his waistcoat pocket a little pearl pen-knife. He reached up. Very slowly and very carefully he picked two apples growing on a bough.

'By Jove! They're warm.' cried father in amazement. 'They're wonderful apples! Tip-top! Marvellous!' he echoed. He rolled them over in his hands.

'Look at that!' he said. 'Not a spot—not a blemish!' And he walked through the orchard with Bogey and me stumbling after, to a tree-stump under the wattles. We sat, one on either side of father. He laid one apple down, opened the pearl pen-knife and neatly and beautifully cut the other in half.

'By Jove! Look at that!' he exclaimed.

'Father!' we cried, dutiful but really enthusiastic, too. For the lovely red colour had bitten right through the white flesh of the apple; it was pink to the shiny black pips lying so justly in their scaly pods. It looked as though the apple had been dipped in wine.

'Never seen *that* before,' said father. 'You won't find an apple like that in a hurry!' He put it to his nose and pronounced an

unfamiliar word. 'Bouquet! What a bouquet!' And then he handed to Bogey one half, to me the other.

'Don't *bolt* it!' said he. It was agony to give even so much away. I knew it, while I took mine humbly and humbly Bogey took his.

Then he divided the second with the same neat beautiful little cut of the pearl knife.

I kept my eyes on Bogey. Together we took a bite. Our mouths were full of a floury stuff, a hard, faintly bitter skin—a horrible taste of something dry. . . .

'Well?' asked father, very jovial. He had cut his two halves into quarters and was taking out the little pods. 'Well?'

Bogey and I stared at each other, chewing desperately. In that second of chewing and swallowing a long silent conversation passed between us—and a strange meaning smile. We swallowed. We edged near father, just touching him.

'Perfect!' we lied. 'Perfect—father! Simply lovely!'

But it was no use. Father spat his out and never went near the apple-tree again.

In November Katherine gave up the house in Acacia Road, and went to the south of France. I went with her, but returned to England after three weeks.

November, Bandol, France *Brother.* I think I have known for a long time that life was over for me, but I never realised it or acknowledged it until my brother died. Yes, though he is lying in the middle of a little wood in France and I am still walking upright and feeling the sun and the wind from the sea, I am just as much dead as he is. The present and the future mean nothing to me. I am no longer 'curious' about people; I do not wish to go anywhere; and the only possible value that anything can have for me is that it should put me in mind of something that happened or was when we were alive.

'Do you remember, Katie?' I hear his voice in the trees and flowers, in scents and light and shadow. Have people, apart from these far-away people, ever existed for me? Or have they always

failed me and faded because I denied them reality? Supposing I were to die as I sit at this table, playing with my Indian paper-knife, what would be the difference? No difference at all. Then why don't I commit suicide? Because I feel I have a duty to perform to the lovely time when we were both alive. I want to write about it, and he wanted me to. We talked it over in my little top room in London. I said: I will just put on the front page: To my brother, Leslie Heron Beauchamp. Very well: it shall be done.

The wind died down at sunset. Half a ring of moon hangs in the hollow air. It is very quiet. Somewhere I can hear a woman crooning a song. Perhaps she is crouched before the stove in the corridor, for it is the kind of song that a woman sings before a fire—brooding, warm, sleepy, and safe. I see a little house with flower patches under the windows and the soft mass of a haystack at the back. The fowls have all gone to roost—they are woolly blurs on the perches. The pony is in the stable with a cloth on. The dog lies in the kennel, his head on his forepaws. The cat sits up beside the woman, her tail tucked in, and the man, still young and careless, comes clinking up the dark road. Suddenly a spot of light shows in the window and on the pansy bed below, and he walks quicker, whistling.

But where are these comely people? These young strong people with hard healthy bodies and curling hair? They are not saints or philosophers; they are decent human beings—but where *are they?*

Sunday. [*December*] Ten minutes past four. I am sure that this Sunday is the worst Sunday of all my life. I've touched bottom. Even my heart doesn't beat any longer. I only keep alive by a kind of buzz of blood in my veins. Now the dark is coming back again; only at the windows there is a white glare. My watch ticks loudly and strongly on the bed table, as though it were rich with minute life, while I faint—I die.

It is evening again. The sea runs very high. It frets, sweeps up and over, hugs, leaps upon the rocks. In the sharp metallic light the rocks have a reddish tinge. Above them a broad band of green

mixed with a rich sooty black; above it the cone of a violet mountain; above the mountain a light blue sky shining like the inside of a wet sea-shell. Every moment the light changes. Even as I write, it is no longer hard. Some small white clouds top the mountain like tossed-up smoke. And now a purple colour, very menacing and awful, is pulling over the sky. The trees tumble about in the unsteady light. A dog barks. The gardener, talking to himself, shuffles across the new raked path, picks up his weed basket and goes off. Two lovers are walking together by the edge of the sea. They are muffled up in coats. She has a red handkerchief on her head. They walk, very proud and careless, hugging each other and braving the wind.

I am ill to-day—I cannot walk at all—and in pain.

Wednesday [*December.*] To-day I am hardening my heart. I am walking all round my heart and building up the defences. I do not mean to leave a loophole even for a tuft of violets to grow in. Give me a hard heart, O Lord! Lord, harden thou my heart!

This morning I could walk a little. So I went to the Post Office. It was bright with sun. The palm-trees stood up into the air, crisp and shining; the blue gums hung heavy with sun as is their wont. When I reached the road I heard a singing. A funny thought . . . 'The English have come!' But of course, it was not they.

The illness from which Katherine suffered at this time was a rheumatic pain which had a pernicious effect on the action of her heart. It had no connection with the pulmonary tuberculosis of which she died. This did not appear until two years later, in December 1917. *Katherine was always convinced that she would die of heart-failure.*

An Encounter.

This afternoon I did not go for a walk. There is a long stone embankment that goes out into the sea. Huge stones on either side and a little rough goat path in the centre. When I came to the end the sun was going down. So, feeling extremely solitary and romantic, I sat me down on a stone and watched the red sun, which looked horribly like a morsel of tinned apricot, sink into a

sea like a huge junket. I began, feebly but certainly perceptibly to harp: 'Alone between sea and sky, etc.' But suddenly I saw a minute speck on the bar coming towards me. It grew, it turned into a young officer in dark blue, slim, with an olive skin, fine eyebrows, long blue eyes, a fine silky moustache.

'You are alone, Madame?'

'Alone, Monsieur.'

'You are living at the hotel, Madame?'

'At the hotel, Monsieur.'

'Ah, I have noticed you walking alone several times, Madame.'

'It is possible, Monsieur.'

He blushed and put his hand to his cap.

'I am very indiscreet, Madame.'

'Very indiscreet, Monsieur.'

Et in Arcadia Ego.

To sit in front of the little wood fire, your hands crossed in your lap and your eyes closed—to fancy you see again upon your eyelids all the dancing beauty of the day, to feel the flame on your throat as you used to imagine you felt the spot of yellow when Bogey held a buttercup under your chin . . . when breathing is such a delight that you are almost afraid to breathe—as though a butterfly fanned its wings upon your breast. Still to taste the warm sunlight that melted in your mouth; still to smell the white waxy scent that lay upon the jonquil fields and the wild spicy scent of the rosemary growing in little tufts among the red rocks close to the brim of the sea. . . .

The moon is rising but the reluctant day lingers upon the sea and sky. The sea is dabbled with a pink the colour of unripe cherries, and in the sky there is a flying yellow light like the wings of canaries. Very stubborn and solid are the trunks of the palm trees. Springing from their tops the stiff green bouquets seem to cut into the evening air and among them, the blue gum trees, tall and slender with sickle-shaped leaves and drooping branches half blue, half violet. The moon is just over the mountain behind the village. The dogs know she is there; already they begin to howl

and bark. The fishermen are shouting and whistling to one another as they bring in their boats, some young boys are singing in half-broken voices down by the shore, and there is a noise of children crying, little children with burnt cheeks and sand between their toes being carried home to bed. . . .

I am tired, blissfully tired. Do you suppose that daisies feel blissfully tired when they shut for the night and the dews descend upon them?

(*December 24.*)

1916

At the end of December 1915 *I returned to Bandol. Katherine had taken a tiny four-roomed villa, Villa Pauline, with an almond-tree that tapped at the window of the* salle à manger. *There we stayed until April* 1916; *and there Katherine wrote the first version of* Prelude.

January 22 [*Villa Pauline, Bandol.*] Now, really, what is it that I do want to write? I ask myself, Am I less of a writer than I used to be? Is the need to write less urgent? Does it still seem as natural to me to seek that form of expression? Has speech fulfilled it? Do I ask anything more than to relate, to remember, to assure myself?

There are times when these thoughts half-frighten me and very nearly convince. I say: You are now so fulfilled in your own being, in being alive, in living, in aspiring towards a greater sense of life and a deeper loving, the other thing has gone out of you.

But no, at bottom I am not convinced, for at bottom never has my desire been so ardent. Only the form that I would choose has changed utterly. I feel no longer concerned with the same appearance of things. The people who lived or whom I wished to bring into my stories don't interest me any more. The plots of my stories leave me perfectly cold. Granted that these people exist and all the differences, complexities and resolutions are true to them—why should *I* write about them? They are not near me. All the false threads that bound me to them are cut away quite.

Now—now I want to write recollections of my own country. Yes, I want to write about my own country till I simply exhaust

my store. Not only because it is 'a sacred debt' that I pay to my country because my brother and I were born there, but also because in my thoughts I range with him over all the remembered places. I am never far away from them. I long to renew them in writing.

Ah, the people—the people we loved there—of them, too, I want to write. Another 'debt of love'. Oh, I want for one moment to make our undiscovered country leap into the eyes of the Old World. It must be mysterious, as though floating. It must take the breath. It must be 'one of those islands. . . '. I shall tell everything, even of how the laundry-basket squeaked at 75. But all must be told with a sense of mystery, a radiance, an afterglow, because you, my little sun of it, are set. You have dropped over the dazzling brim of the world. Now I must play my part.

Then I want to write poetry. I feel always trembling on the brink of poetry. The almond tree, the birds, the little wood where you are, the flowers you do not see, the open window out of which I lean and dream that you are against my shoulder, and the times that your photograph 'looks sad'. But especially I want to write a kind of long elegy to you . . . perhaps not in poetry. Nor perhaps in prose. Almost certainly in a kind of *special prose*.

And, lastly, I want to keep a kind of *minute notebook*, to be published some day. That's all. No novels, no problem stories, nothing that is not simple, open.

K. M.

February 13 I have written practically nothing yet, and now again the time is getting short. There is nothing done. I am no nearer my achievement than I was two months ago, and I keep half-doubting my will to perform anything. Each time I make a vow my demon says at almost the same moment: 'Oh, yes, we've heard that before!' And then I hear R.D. in the Café Royal, 'Do you still write?' If I went back to England without a book *finished* I should give myself up. I should know that, whatever I said, I was not really a writer and had no claim to 'a table in my room'. But if I go back with a book finished it will be a *profession de foi pour toujours*. Why do I hesitate so long? It is just idleness?

Lack of will-power? Yes, I feel that's what it is, and that's why it's so immensely important that I should assert myself. I have put a table to-day in my room, facing a corner, but from where I sit I can see some top shoots of the almond-tree and the sea sounds loud. There is a vase of beautiful geraniums on the table. Nothing could be nicer than this spot, and it's so quiet and so high, like sitting up in a tree. I feel I shall be able to write here, especially towards twilight.

Ah, once fairly alight—how I'd blaze and burn! Here is a new fact. When I am not writing I feel my brother calling me, and he is not happy. Only when I write or am in a state of writing—a state of 'inspiration'—do I feel that he is calm. . . . Last night I dreamed of him and Father Zossima. Father Zossima said: 'Do not let the new man die.' My brother was certainly there. But last evening he called me while I sat down by the fire. At last I obeyed and came upstairs. I stayed in the dark and waited. The moon got very bright. There were stars outside, very bright twinkling stars, that seemed to move as I watched them. The moon shone. I could see the curve of the sea and the curve of the land embracing, and above in the sky there was a round sweep of cloud. Perhaps those three half-circles were very magic. But then, when I leaned out of the window I seemed to see my brother dotted all over the field—now on his back, now on his face, now huddled up, now half-pressed into the earth. Wherever I looked, there he lay. I felt that God showed him to me like that for some express purpose, and I knelt down by the bed. But I could not pray. I had done no work. I was not in an active state of grace. So I got up finally and went downstairs again. But I was terribly sad. . . . The night before, when I lay in bed, I felt suddenly passionate. I wanted J. to embrace me. But as I turned to speak to him or to kiss him I saw my brother lying fast asleep, and I got cold. That happens nearly always. Perhaps because I went to sleep thinking of him, I woke and was he, for quite a long time. I felt my face was his serious, sleepy face. I felt that the lines of my mouth were changed, and I blinked like he did on waking.

This year I have to make money and get known. I want to

make enough money to be able to give L.M. some. In fact, I want to provide for her. That's my idea, and to make enough so that J. and I shall be able to pay our debts and live honourably. I should like to have a book published and *numbers* of short stories ready. Ah, even as I write, the smoke of a cigarette seems to mount in a reflective way, and I feel nearer that kind of silent, crystallised being that used to be almost me.

February 14 I begin to think of an unfinished memory which has been with me for years. It is a very good story if only I can tell it right, and it is called *Lena*. It plays in New Zealand and would go in the book. If only I can get right down to it.

Dear brother, as I jot these notes, I am speaking to you. To whom did I always write when I kept those huge complaining diaries? Was it to myself? But now as I write these words and talk of getting down to the New Zealand atmosphere, I see you opposite to me, I see your thoughtful, shining eyes. Yes, it is to you. We were travelling—sitting opposite to each other and moving very fast. Ah, my darling, how have I kept away from this tremendous joy? Each time I take up my pen *you* are with me. You are mine. You are my playfellow, my brother, and we shall range all over our country together. It is with you that I see, and that is why I see so clearly. That is a great mystery. My brother, I have doubted these last few days. I have been in dreadful places. I have felt that I could not *come* through to you. But now, quite suddenly, the mists are rising, and I see and I know you are near me. You are more vividly with me now this moment than if you were alive and I were writing to you from a short distance away. As you speak my name, the name you call me by that I love so—'Katie!'—your lip lifts in a smile—you believe in me, you know I am here. Oh, Chummie! put your arms round me. I was going to write: Let us shut out everybody. But no, it is not that. Only we shall 'look on' at them together. My brother, you know, with all my desire, my will is weak. To do things—even to write absolutely for myself and by myself—is awfully hard for me. God knows why, when my desire is so strong. But just as it was always

our delight to sit together—you remember?—and to talk of the old days, down to the last detail—the last feeling—looking at each other and by our eyes expressing when speech ended how intimately we understood each other—so now, my dear one, we shall do that again. You know how unhappy I have been lately. I almost felt: Perhaps 'the new man' will not live. Perhaps I am not yet risen. . . . But now I do not doubt. It is the idea (it has always been there, but never as it is with me to-night) that I do not write alone. That in every word I write and every place I visit I carry you with me. Indeed, that might be the motto of my book. There are daisies on the table and a red flower, like a poppy, shines through. Of daisies I will write. Of the dark. Of the wind—and the sun and the mists. Of the wharves. Ah! of all that you loved and that I too love and feel. To-night it is made plain. However often I write and rewrite I shall not really falter, dearest, and the book shall be written and ready.

February 15 I have broken the silence. It took long. Did I fail you when I sat reading? Oh, bear with me a little. I will be better. I will do *all*, all that we would wish. Love, I will not fail. To-night it is very wild. Do you hear? It is all wind and sea. You feel that the world is blowing like a feather, springing and rocking in the air like a balloon from Lindsay's. I seem to hear a piano sometimes, but that's fancy. How loud the wind sounds! If I write every day faithfully a little record of how I have kept faith with you—that is what I must do. Now you are back with me. You are stepping forward, one hand in your pocket. My brother, my little boy brother! Your thoughtful eyes! I see you always as you left me. I saw you a moment alone—by yourself—and quite lost, I felt. My heart yearned over you then. Oh, it yearns over you to-night and now! Did you cry? I always felt: He never, never must be unhappy. Now I will come quite close to you, take your hand, and we shall tell this story to each other.

February 16 I *found The Aloe*[1] this morning. And when I had

[1] *The Aloe* was the original version of *Prelude*. It exists in its original and longer form, and has been published separately.

re-read it I knew that I was not quite 'right' yesterday. No, dearest, it was not just the spirit. *The Aloe* is right. *The Aloe* is lovely. It simply fascinates me, and I know that it is what you would wish me to write. And now I know what the last chapter is. It is your birth—your coming in the autumn. You in Grandmother's arms under the tree, your solemnity, your wonderful beauty. Your hands, your head—your helplessness, lying on the earth, and, above all, your tremendous solemnity. That chapter will end the book. The next book will be yours and mine. And you must mean the world to Linda; and before ever you are born Kezia must play with you—her little Bogey. Oh, Bogey—I must hurry. All of them must have this book. It is good, my treasure! My little brother, it is good, and it is what we really meant.

February 17 I am sad to-night. Perhaps it is the old forlorn wind. And the thought of you *spiritually* is not enough to-night. I want you by me. I must get deep down into my book, for then I shall be happy. Lose myself, lose myself to find you, dearest. Oh, I want this book to be written. It MUST be done. It must be bound and wrapped and sent to New Zealand. I feel that with all my soul. . . . It will be.

Notes for The Aloe.

In the scurrely, as Lottie says.

Look out now, Rags! Don't you touch that when I'm not here. If you put the tip of your finger into that, it 'ud wither your hand off!

'We came over with Mum on the bus and were going to stay to dinner. What time is dinner at your new place?'

'The same time as we always used to have it,' said Lottie.

'When the bell rings.'

'Pooh! that isn't what time,' said Pip. 'We always have our dinner hal' pas' twelve. Let's go round to the kitchen and ask your servant what time yours is.'

'We're not allowed to go into the kitchen in the morning,' said Isabel. 'We have to keep away from the back of the house.'

'Well, Rags and I can, because we're visitors. Come on, Rags!'

But when they had passed through the side gate, opening with a big iron ring, that led into the courtyard, they forgot all about asking the servant.

'What do you have for dinner?'

'The same as we always used to have,' said Lottie, 'except we have cold milk instead of water to drink.'

Mrs. Trout, she was a widow. Her husband had died five years before, and immediately upon his death, before he was cold, she had married again, far more thoroughly and more faithfully than she ever had married him.

The Journey Home.

The Aloe. . . .

Stanley Burnell: Beryl plays the guitar.

The Samuel Josephs; the Journey and Supper; Bed for all. Dan; Burnell courting Linda; Mrs. Burnell and Beryl; Kezia; The Aloe.

Stanley Burnell drives home; the Nursery; Beryl with a guitar; Children; Alice; The Trout sisters; Mrs. Trout's latest novel; Cribbage; Linda and her Mother.

Really thirteen chapters.

They cut down the stem when Linda is ill. She has been counting on the flowering of the Aloe.

That Woman.

Sitting astride the bow window ledge, smelling the heliotrope —or was it the sea?—half of Kezia was in the garden and half of her in the room.

'Have you put down the Harcourts?'

'Yes, Mrs. Phil and Mrs. Charlie.'

'And the Fields?'

'Mrs. *and* the Misses Field.'

'And Rose Conway?'

'Yes, and that Melbourne girl staying with her.'

'Old Mrs. Grady?'

'Do you think—necessary?'

'My dear, she does so love a good cackle.'

'Oh, but that way she has of dipping everything in her tea! Iced chocolate cake and the ends of her feather boa dipped in tea. . . .

'How marvellously that ribbon has lasted, Harrie! Marvellously!'

That was Aunt Beryl's voice. She, Aunt Harrie and Mother sat at the round table with big shallow teacups in front of them.

In the dusky light, in their white puffed-up muslin blouses with wing sleeves, they were three birds at the edge of a lily pond. Beyond them the shadowy room melted into the shadow; the gold picture frames were traced upon the air; the cut-glass door-knob glittered; a song—a white butterfly with wings outspread —clung to the ebony piano.

Aunt Harrie's plaintive, singing tones: 'It's very faded, really, if you look into it. I don't think it can possibly stand another ironing.'

'If I were rich,' said Aunt Beryl, 'with real money to spend—not save' . . .

'What about—what about asking that Gibbs woman?'

'Linda!'

'How can you suggest such a thing!'

'Well, why not? She needn't come. But it must be so horrid not to be asked anywhere!'

'But, good heavens, whose fault is it? Who could ask her?'

'She's nobody but herself to blame.'

'She's simply flown in people's faces.'

'And it must be so particularly dreadful for Mr. Gibbs.'

'But Harrie, dear, he's dead.'

'Of course, Linda, that's just it. He must feel so helpless, looking down.'

Kezia heard her mother say: 'I never thought of that. Yes, that might be . . . very maddening!'

Aunt Beryl's cool little voice gushed up and overflowed: 'It's really nothing to laugh at, Linda. There are some things one really must draw the line at.'

A Recollection of Childhood.

Things happened so simply then, without preparation and without any shock. They let me go into my mother's room (I remember standing on tiptoe and using both hands to turn the big white china door-handle) and there lay my mother in bed with her arms along the sheet, and there sat my grandmother before the fire with a baby in a flannel across her knees. My mother paid no attention to me at all. Perhaps she was asleep, for my grandmother nodded and said in a voice scarcely above a whisper, 'Come and see your little sister.' I tiptoed to her voice across the room, and she parted the flannel, and I saw a little round head with a tuft of goldy hair on it and a big face with eyes shut—white as snow. 'Is it alive?' I asked. 'Of course,' said grandmother. Look at her holding my finger.' And—yes, a hand, scarcely bigger than my doll's, in a frilled sleeve, was wound round her finger. 'Do you like her?' said my grandmother. 'Yes. Is she going to play with the doll's house?' 'By-and-by,' said the grandmother, and I felt very pleased. Mrs. Heywood had just given us the doll's house. It was a beautiful one with a verandah and a balcony and a door that opened and shut and two chimneys. I wanted badly to show it to someone else.

'Her name is Gwen,' said the grandmother. 'Kiss her.'

I bent down and kissed the little goldy tuft. But she took no notice. She lay quite still with her eyes shut.

'Now go and kiss mother,' said the grandmother.

But mother did not want to kiss me. Very languid, leaning against the pillows, she was eating some sago. The sun shone through the windows and winked on the brass knobs on the big bed.

After that grandmother came into the nursery with Gwen, and sat in front of the nursery fire in the rocking chair with her. Meg and Tadpole were away staying with Aunt Harriet, and they had

gone before the new doll's house arrived, so that was why I so longed to have somebody to show it to. I had gone all through it myself, from the kitchen to the dining-room, up into the bedrooms with the doll's lamp on the table, heaps and heaps of times.

'*When* will she play with it?' I asked grandmother.

'By-and-by, darling.'

It was spring. Our garden was full of big white lilies. I used to run out and sniff them and come in again with my nose all yellow.

'Can't she go out?'

At last, one very fine day, she was wrapped in the warm shawl and grandmother carried her into the cherry orchard, and walked up and down under the falling cherry flowers. Grandmother wore a grey dress with white pansies on it. The doctor's carriage was waiting at the door, and the doctor's little dog, Jackie, rushed at me and snapped at my bare legs. When we went back to the nursery and the shawl was taken away, little white petals like feathers fell out of the folds. But Gwen did not look, even then. She lay in grandmother's arms, her eyes just open to show a line of blue, her face very white, and the one tuft of goldy hair standing up on her head.

All day, all night grandmother's arms were full. I had no lap to climb into, no pillow to rest against. All belonged to Gwen. But Gwen did not notice this; she never put up her hand to play with the silver brooch that was a half-moon with five little owls sitting on it; she never pulled grandmother's watch from her bodice and opened the back by herself to see grandfather's hair; she never buried her head close to smell the lavender water, or took up grandmother's spectacle case and wondered at its being really silver. She just lay still and let herself be rocked.

Down in the kitchen one day old Mrs. McElvie came to the door and asked Bridget about the poor little mite, and Bridget said, 'Kep' alive on bullock's blood hotted in a saucer over a candle.' After that I felt frightened of Gwen, and I decided that even when she did play with the doll's house I would not let her go upstairs into the bedroom—only downstairs, and then only when I saw she could look.

Late one evening I sat by the fire on my little carpet hassock and grandmother rocked, singing the song she used to sing to me, but more gently. Suddenly she stopped and I looked up. Gwen opened her eyes and turned her little round head to the fire and looked and looked at, and then—turned her eyes up to the face bending over her. I saw her tiny body stretch out and her hands flew up, and 'Ah! Ah! Ah!' called the grandmother.

Bridget dressed me next morning. When I went into the nursery I sniffed. A big vase of the white lilies was standing on the table. Grandmother sat in her chair to one side with Gwen in her lap, and a funny little man with his head in a black bag was standing behind a box of china eggs.

'Now!' he said, and I saw my grandmother's face change as she bent over little Gwen.

'Thank you,' said the man, coming out of the bag. The picture was hung over the nursery fire. I thought it looked very nice. The doll's house was in it—verandah and balcony and all. Gran held me up to kiss my little sister.

Recollections of College.

J.'s application is a perpetual reminder to me. Why am I not writing too? Why, feeling so rich, with the greater part of this to be written *before* I go back to England, do I not begin? If only I have the courage to press against the stiff swollen gate, all that lies within is mine; why do I linger for a moment? Because I am idle, out of the habit of work and spendthrift beyond belief. Really it is idleness, a kind of immense idleness—hateful and disgraceful.

I was thinking yesterday of my *wasted, wasted* early girlhood. My college life, which is such a vivid and detailed memory in one way, might never have contained a book or a lecture. I lived in the girls, the professor, the big, lovely building,[1] the leaping fires in winter and the abundant flowers in summer. The views out of the windows, all the pattern that was—weaving. Nobody saw it, I felt, as I did. My mind was just like a squirrel. I gathered and gathered and hid away, for that long 'winter' when I should re-

[1] Queen's College, Harley Street, London.

discover all this treasure—and if anybody came close I scuttled up the tallest, darkest tree and hid in the branches. And I was so awfully fascinated in watching Hall Griffin and all his tricks—thinking about him as he sat there, his private life, what he was like as a man, etc., etc. (He told us he and his brother once wrote an enormous poem called the Epic of the Hall Griffins.) Then it was only at rare intervals that something flashed through all this busyness, something about Spenser's Faerie Queene or Keats's Isabella or the Pot of Basil, and those flashes were always when I disagreed flatly with H.G. and wrote in my notes—This man is a fool. And Cramb, wonderful Cramb! The figure of Cramb was enough, he was 'history' to me. Ageless and fiery, eating himself up again and again, very fierce at what he had seen, but going a bit blind because he had looked so long. Cramb striding up and down, filled me up to the brim. I couldn't write down Cramb's thunder. I simply wanted to sit and hear him. Every gesture, every stopping of his walk, all his tones and looks are as vivid to me as though it were yesterday—but of all he said I only remember phrases—'He sat there and his wig fell off—' 'Anne Bullen, a lovely *pure* creature stepping out of her quiet door into the light and clamour,' and looking back and seeing the familiar door shut upon her, with a little click as it were,—final.

But what coherent account could I give of the history of English Literature? And what of English History? None. When I think in *dates* and *times* the wrong people come in—the right people are missing.[1] When I read a play of Shakespeare I want to be able to place it in relation to what came before and what comes after. I want to realise what England was like then, at least a little, and what the people looked like (but even as I write I feel I can do this, at least the latter thing), but when a man is mentioned, even though the man is real, I don't want to set him on the right hand of Sam Johnson when he ought to be living under Shakespeare's shadow. And this I often do.

[1]On the opposite page is a long list of the chief figures in the history of English Literature, working backwards from the eighteenth century. Evidently, Katherine had been trying to test her knowledge. In the final result, the list, though it is much corrected, is singularly accurate.

Since I came here I have been very interested in the Bible. I have read the Bible for hours on end and I began to do so with just the same desire. I wanted to know if Lot followed close on Noah or something like that. But I feel so bitterly I should have known facts like this: they ought to be part of my breathing. Is there another grown person as ignorant as I? But why didn't I listen to the old Principal who lectured on Bible History twice a week instead of staring at his face that was very round, a dark red colour with a kind of bloom on it and covered all over with little red veins with endless tiny tributaries that ran even up his forehead and were lost in his bushy white hair. He had tiny hands, too, puffed up, purplish, shining under the stained flesh. I used to think, looking at his hands—he will have a stroke and die of paralysis. . . . They told us he was a very learned man, but I could not help seeing him in a double-breasted frock-coat, a large pseudo-clerical pith helmet, a large white handkerchief falling over the back of his neck, standing and pointing out with an umbrella a probable site of a probable encampment of some wandering tribe, to his wife, an elderly lady with a threatening heart who had to go everywhere in a basket-chair arranged on the back of a donkey, and his two daughters, in thread gloves and sand shoes—smelling faintly of some anti-mosquito mixture.

As he lectured I use to sit, building his house, peopling it—filling it with Americans, ebony and heavy furniture—cupboards like tiny domes and tables with elephants' legs presented to him by grateful missionary friends. . . . I never came into contact with him but once, when he asked any young lady in the room to hold up her hand if she had been chased by a wild bull, and as nobody else did I held up mine (though of course I hadn't). 'Ah,' he said, 'I am afraid you do not count. You are a little savage from New Zealand'—which was a trifle exacting, for it must be the rarest thing to be chased by a wild bull up and down Harley Street, Wimpole Street, Welbeck Street, Queen Anne, round and round Cavendish Square. . . .

And why didn't I learn French with M. Huguenot? What an opportunity missed! What has it not cost me! He lectured in a

big narrow room that was painted all over—the walls, door, and window-frames, a grey shade of mignonette green. The ceiling was white, and just below it there was a frieze of long looped chains of white flowers. On either side of the marble mantelpiece a naked small boy staggered under a big platter of grapes that he held above his head. Below the windows, far below there was a stable court paved in cobble stones, and one could hear the faint clatter of carriages coming out or in, the noise of water gushing out of a pump into a big pail—some youth, clumping about and whistling. The room was never very light, and in summer M.H. liked the blinds to be drawn half-way down the window. . . . He was a little fat man.

The old man could not get over the fact that he was still strong enough to lift such a lump of a boy. He wanted to do it again and again, and even when the little boy was awfully tired of the game the old man kept putting out his arms and smiling foolishly and trying to lift him still higher. He even tried with one arm. . . .

Saunders Lane.

March 12 Our house in Tinakori Road stood far back from the road. It was a big, white-painted square house with a slender pillared verandah and balcony running all the way round it. In the front from the verandah edge the garden sloped away in terraces and flights of concrete steps—down—until you reached the stone wall covered with nasturtiums that had three gates let into it—the visitors' gate, the Tradesmen's gate, and a huge pair of old iron gates that were never used and clashed and clamoured when Bogey and I tried to swing on them.

Tinakori Road was not fashionable; it was very mixed. Of course there were some good houses in it, old ones, like ours for instance, hidden away in wildish gardens, and there was no doubt that land there would become extremely valuable, as Father said, if one bought enough and hung on.

It was high, it was healthy; the sun poured in all the windows all day long, and once we had a decent tramway service, as Father argued. . . .

But it was a little trying to have one's own washerwoman living next door who would persist in attempting to talk to Mother over the fence, and then, just beyond her 'hovel', as Mother called it, there lived an old man who burned leather in his back yard whenever the wind blew our way. And further along there lived an endless family of halfcastes who appeared to have planted their garden with empty jam tins and old sauce-pans and black iron kettles without lids. And then just opposite our house across the road there was a paling fence, and below the paling fence in a hollow, squeezed in almost under the fold of a huge gorse-covered hill, was Saunders Lane.

March Jinnie Moore was awfully good at elocution. Was she better than I? I could make the girls cry when I read Dickens in the sewing class, and she couldn't. But then she never tried to. She didn't care for Dickens; she liked something about horses and tramps and shipwrecks and prairie fires—they were her style, her reckless, red haired, dashing style.

The following is an unposted letter written to Frederick Goodyear,[1] *a close friend of both Katherine and myself. He was at this time serving in France in the Meteorological section of the Royal Engineers. A few months afterwards he applied for a commission in an infantry regiment in order to go to the fighting line. There he was killed, in May* 1917. *It should be put on record that no single one of Katherine's friends who went to the war returned alive from it. This will explain the profound and ineradicable impression made upon her by the war, an impression which found perfect utterance in the last year of her life in the story,'The Fly.'*

The concluding words of Goodyear's letter to Katherine, to which hers was a reply, are these:

'The fact is I'm simply in a chronic surly temper with life: and NOTHING, *if I can possibly help it, shall make me emerge.*

We want a definition. If love is only when it is resistless, I don't love you. But if it is a relative emotion, I do.

Personally, I think everything everywhere is bunkum.

Fredk. Goodyear.'

[1]For Katherine's regard for Goodyear, see *Letters to J.M.M.* pp. 576 and 634.

Sunday *Villa Pauline, Bandol* (*Var*). Mr. F.G. Never did cow-cumber lie more heavy on a female's buzzum than your curdling effugion which I have read twice and won't again if horses drag me. But I keep wondering, and can't for the life of me think, whatever there was in mine to so importantly disturb you. (Henry James is dead. Did you know?) I did not, swayed by a resistless passion, say that I loved you. Nevertheless I am prepared to say it again looking at this pound of onions that hangs in a string kit from a saucepan nail. But why should you write to me as though I'd got into the family way and driven round to you in a hansom cab to ask you to make a respectable woman of me? Yes, you're bad tempered, suspicious and surly. And if you think I flung my bonnet over you as a possible mill, my lad, you're mistook.

In fact, now I come to ponder on your last letter I don't believe you want to write to me at all, and I'm hanged if I'll shoot arrows in the air. But perhaps that is temper on my part; it is certainly pure stomach. I'm so hungry, simply empty, and seeing in my mind's eye just now a sirloin of beef, well browned with plenty of gravy *and* horseradish sauce and baked potatoes, I nearly sobbed. There's nothing here to eat except omelettes and oranges and onions. It's a cold, sunny, windy day—the kind of day when you want a tremendous feed for lunch and an armchair in front of the fire to boa-constrict in afterwards. I feel sentimental about England now—English food, *decent* English *waste!* How much better than these thrifty French, whose flower gardens are nothing but potential salad bowls. There's not a leaf in France that you can't 'faire une infusion avec', not a blade that isn't 'bon pour la cuisine'. By God, I'd like to buy a pound of the best butter, put it on the window sill and watch it melt to spite 'em. They are a stingy uncomfortable crew for all their lively scrapings. . . . For instance, their houses—what appalling furniture—and never one comfortable chair. If you want to talk the only possible thing to do is to go to bed. It's a case of either standing on your feet or lying in comfort under a puffed-up eiderdown. I quite understand the reason for what is called French moral laxity. You're simply forced into

bed—no matter with whom. There's no other place for you. Supposing a *young* man comes to see about the electric light and will go on talking and pointing to the ceiling—or a friend drops in to tea and asks you if you believe in Absolute Evil. How can you give your mind to these things when you're sitting on four knobs and a square inch of cane? How much better to lie snug and *give yourself up to it.*

Later.

Now I've eaten one of the omelettes and one of the oranges. The sun has gone in; it's beginning to thunder. There's a little bird on a tree outside this window not so much singing as sharpening a note. He's getting a very fine point to it; I expect you would know his name. . . . Write to me again when everything is not *too* bunkum.

Good-bye for now!

With my strictly relative love

K. M.

Notes on Dostoevsky.

The Idiot. Nastasya Filippovna Barashkov.

Page 7. She is first mentioned by Rogozhin in the train, and she is immediately 'recognised' by a man with a red nose and a pimpled face who 'knows all about her'.

'Armance and Coralie and Princess Patsky *and* Nastasya Filippovna.'

'We'll go and see Nastasya Filippovna.' *Prophetic words!*

Page 9. Why did she accept the ear-rings from a man she had never seen? She was not greedy for jewels. She had plenty, and she was extremely particular in her conduct towards other men. Is that a kind of Russian custom? To accept the ear-rings as a kind of recognition of her beauty?

Pages 26, 27. The Portrait: 'Her eyes were dark and deep . . . her expression passionate and disdainful.'

Page 33. 'The face is cheerful, but she has passed through terrible suffering, hasn't she? . . . It's a proud face, awfully proud,

but I don't know whether she is kindhearted. Ah! If she were! That would redeem it all.'

Page 37. The story of Nastasya. That change in her when she appears in Petersburg—her knowledge, almost 'technical', of how things are done in the world, is not at all impossible. With such women it seems to be a kind of instinct. (Maata was just the same. She simply knew these things from nowhere.) Her action, that she says is 'from spite', is to shew her power, and that when Totsky has jerked out the weapon with which he wounded her she feels the dreadful smart.

Page 366. Myshkin to Rogozhin. 'Do you know that she may love you now more than anyone, and in such a way that the more she torments you, the more she loves you? She won't tell you so, but you must know how to see it. When all's said and done, why else is she going to marry you? Some day she will tell you so herself. Some women want to be loved like that, and that's just her character. And your love and your character must impress her! Do you know that a woman is capable of torturing a man with her cruelty and mockery without the faintest twinge of conscience, because she'll think every time she looks at you: "I'm tormenting him to death now, but I'll make up for it with my love later." '

Having read the whole of *The Idiot* through again, and fairly carefully, I feel slightly more bewildered than I did before as regards Nastasya Filippovna's character. She is really not well done. She is badly done. And there grows up as one reads on a kind of irritation, a *balked* fascination, which almost succeeds finally in blotting out those first and really marvellous 'impressions' of her. What was Dostoevsky really aiming at?

The Possessed. Shatov and his wife.

There is something awfully significant about the attitude of Shatov to his wife, and it is amazing how, when Dostoevsky at last turns a soft but penetrating and full light upon him, how we have managed to gather a great deal of knowledge of his character from the former vague side-lights and shadowy impressions. He

is just what we thought him; he behaves just as we would expect him to do. There is all that crudity and what you might call 'shock-headedness' in his nature—and it is wonderfully tragic that he who is so soon to be destroyed himself should suddenly realise—and through a third person—through a little squealing baby—the miracle just being alive is.

'There were two and now there's a third human being, a new spirit, finished and complete, unlike the handiwork of man; a new thought and a new love . . . it's positively frightening. . . . And there's nothing grander in the world.'

Every time I read those chapters about his new-born happiness I cherish a kind of tiny hope that this time he will escape—he will be warned, he won't die.

Page 237. Shatov to Stavrogin. 'You married from a passion for martyrdom, from a craving for remorse, through moral sensuality.' Moral sensuality!

Page 545. ' "Surely you must see that I am in the agonies of childbirth," she said, sitting up and gazing at him with a terrible, hysterical vindictiveness that distorted her whole face. "I curse him before he is born, this child!" '

This vindictiveness is *profoundly* true.

How did Dostoevsky know about that extraordinary vindictive feeling, that relish for little laughter—that comes over women in pain? It is a very secret thing, but it's profound, profound. They don't want to spare the one whom they love. If that one loves them with a kind of blind devotion as Shatov did Marie, they long to torment him, and this tormenting gives them real positive relief. Does this resemble in any way the tormenting that one observes so often in his affairs of passion? Are his women ever happy when they torment their lovers? No, they too are in the agony of labour. They are giving birth to their new selves. And they never believe in their deliverance.

Page 343. ' "Ha ha!" Karmazinov got up from the sofa, wiping his mouth with a table-napkin, and came forward to kiss him with an air of unmixed delight—after the characteristic fashion of Russians if they are very illustrious.'

Not only Russians!

Page 554. Kirillov to Shatov. 'There are seconds—they come five or six at a time—when you suddenly feel the presence of the eternal harmony perfectly attained. It's something not earthly—I don't mean in the sense that it's heavenly—but in the sense that man cannot endure it in his earthly aspect. He must be physically changed or die. This feeling is clear and unmistakable; it's as though you apprehend all nature and suddenly say, "Yes, that's right." God, when he created the world, said at the end of each day of creation, "Yes, it's right, it's good." It . . . it's not being deeply moved, but simply joy. You don't forgive anything because there is no more need for forgiveness. It's not that you love—oh, there's something in it higher than love—what's most awful is that it's terribly clear and such joy. If it lasted more than five seconds, the soul could not endure it and must perish. In those five seconds I live through a lifetime, and I'd give my whole life for them, because they are worth it. To endure ten seconds one must be physically changed.'

I know that.

Lines from Shakespeare.

'When I was at home, I was in a better place;
But travellers must be content.'

'I like this place
And willingly would waste my time in it.'

'Dry as the remainder biscuit after a voyage.'

'Out of this nettle danger
We pluck this flower safety.'

'But that the *scambling* and unquiet time . . .'

'But when he speaks
The air, a chartered libertine, is still.'

'If you would walk off, I'd prick your guts a little in good terms as I may; and that's the humour of it.'

'Why the devil should we keep knives to cut one another's throats?'

'I cannot kiss; that's the humour of it—but adieu.'

March I must not go on thinking like this. My thoughts are all of Chaddie—of our meeting on Monday,[1] of what we shall say and how we shall look. I keep wondering what I shall do if the boat arrives in the middle of the night, or what I shall do if someone robs me while I am there. A thousand different thoughts. And what she will say, and if she will expect me. These thoughts fly through my head like mad things. They never finish; and then there is always the idea that I may, by some awful error, miss her —it isn't possible—and what we shall do when we *do* meet. This is sheer sin, for I ought to be writing my book, and instead I am pretending here.

But all these various things are really, really very difficult to keep up the fight against. And the desire for mid-day and an omelette is really awful. I'm hungry beyond words. An omelette —hot coffee—bread and butter and jam—I could cry at the very thought. Only you see, fool who is reading this, I went out awfully early. Before eight o'clock I was down in the village with my *filet* in my hand a-getting of the lunch and the dinner. And although it pleuvéd cats and dogs I marched about the land, and came back home a kind of hardened sinner.

For the *petits pois*, I really must confess,
Were sinfully expensive and I couldn't have bought less.
I *had* to buy a *demi-livre*, and that's by no means ample.
By the time that they've been shelled and cooked, *il ne reste*
plus qu'un sample.

Twenty to twelve, says our old clock.
It seems to talk and slyly mock
My hunger and my real distress

[1]Two letters describing the journey to Marseilles to meet her sister, who was returning from India, will be found in *Letters to John Middleton Murry* (pp. 82-84). The reference in the doggerel verses is to Katherine's trick of putting on the clock, unknown to me, in order to hasten lunch-time.

At giving way to wickedness.
Oh, say a quarter! Say ten to!
Whirr in the wheezy way you do
Before you strike! But no!
As I have frequently observed,
All clocks are deaf—this hasn't heard.
And, as it is, *grâce à* my guiding,
The brute is fast beyond all hiding.
It is really only seven
Minutes past a bare eleven!
Now Jack's got up and made a move . . .
But only to the shelves above.
He's settled down. Oh, what a blow!
I've still a good fifteen to go.
Before the brute has chimèd well,
I may be dead and gone to hell.

Later: But it wasn't so bad as all that after ALL. I struck work, and we had no end of a good feed, and now it is two (by our clock), so I'll knock off this rubbish and really settle down.

An unposted letter.

Dear Frieda: The new house [Higher Tregerthen] sounds very nice, and I am glad to think we shall be there—all of us, together—this spring. Thank you for your letter, dear, but you really haven't been right in judging us first the kind of traitors that you did. J. *never* would hear a word against Lawrence.

'Spring comes with exquisite effort in England.' A.B.B. [Anne Burnell Beauchamp, Katherine's mother.]

Sewing-Class.

Why can't I change my hair-ribbon on Wednesday afternoon? All the other girls are allowed to; and it can't be because Mother really thinks I shall lose my best one. I know a way to tie a hair-ribbon so that it simply can't possibly come off, and she knows I do, because she taught me herself.

But 'No', says Mother. 'You may put on your threadwork pinafore, but you may not put on your blue satin hair-ribbon. Your ordinary brown velvet one is perfectly neat, suitable and unobtrusive as it is. (Mother loves sentences like this.) I can't help what *all the other* girls do. Have you got your thimble?'

'Yes, Mother, in my pocket.'

'Show it to me, dear.'

'I said, Mother, it was in my pocket.'

'Well, show it to me so that I can be perfectly sure.'

'Oh, Mother, why *do* you treat me like a baby? You always seem to forget on purpose that I'm in my teens. None of the other girls' Mothers. . . .'

Oh well, I'll take my blue satin hair-ribbon in my pocket and change when I get to school. It serves Mother right. I don't want to deceive her, but she makes me deceive her, and she doesn't really care a bit—she only wants to show her power.

It was Wednesday afternoon. I love Wednesday afternoons. I simply adore them. We don't have any real school, only sewing class and elocution in the drawing-room for the girls who take private lessons. Everything is different on Wednesdays. Some of the older ones even wear Japanese silk blouses, and we change into our slippers and we all wash our hands at the lavatory basin in the passage. The ink-pots are put away by the monitors, the desks pushed against the wall. There is a long table down the middle of the room with two big straw baskets on it. The chairs are arranged in little groups. The windows are opened wide. Even the garden outside—with its beaten paths and its flowery bushes tumbled and draggled because the little ones will root under them for their balls—seems to change, to become real on Wednesdays. When we lift our heads to thread our needles the fuchsia is lifting and the camellias are white and red in the bright sun.

We are making cheap flannelette chemises for the Maori Mission. They are as long as night-dresses, very full, with huge armholes and a plain band round the neck—not even a lace edging. Those poor Maoris! they can't all be as fat as these chemises. But Mrs. Wallis, the Bishop's wife, said when she gave the newspaper

pattern to the headmistress, 'It is wiser to reckon on their being fat.' The headmistress laughed very much and told Miss Burton, our class mistress, but Miss Burton is very fat herself so she blushed frightfully—of course, it was pure spite on the headmistress's part. Skinny little thing! I know she thinks she has got a lovely slim figure. You should see her pressing her little grey alpaca hips when she is talking to the curate before Scripture lesson.

But even she is not the same on Wednesday afternoons. Her grey alpaca dress is adorned with a black tulle bow. She wears a tall comb in her hair, and when she's not inspecting the sewing she sits at the end of the long table, her gold-rimmed eyeglasses hooked on her long peaked nose that has such funny little red veins at the end of it, and she reads Dickens aloud.

Our class-room is very big. The walls are free, so are the window sashes and the doors; and all the girls sit in their little cane chairs, their faces showing above a froth of cream flannelette; on their heads their best hair-ribbons perch and quiver. Their hands lift and fall as they sew those Maori Mission seams. Sometimes they sigh or May Swainson sneezes. Ever since she had an operation on her nose she is always sneezing. Or Madge Rothschild, who wears a glacé silk petticoat, gets up and rustles to the table for her scissors or some thread, or to ask if she has to turn down a selvedge.

But all the same it is quiet in the room, it is very quiet; and when the headmistress reads Dickens aloud, there is something so fascinating in her voice that I could listen for years and years. She is reading *David Copperfield*. When there is a full-page illustration she passes the book round for us to look. One by one we put our sewing down. 'Quickly, girls! Don't dawdle over it!'

How funny! The headmistress herself is exactly like one of those illustrations—so tiny, so spry. While she waits for the book to come back she sits polishing her eyeglasses on a handkerchief that is tucked between two hooks of her grey alpaca bodice. What does she remind me of? She reminds me of a bird and a donkey mixed. . . .

'Bring me that here to look at—will you, Katherine?'
(*March*, 1916.)

Rose Eagle.

It was wonderful how quickly Rose Eagle forgot the first fourteen years of her life. They were nothing but a dream, out of which she wakened to find herself sitting on her yellow tin box in the kitchen of her 'first place', with a queer shaking in her hands and knees and the hot blood burning and tightening her cheeks. She and the yellow tin box might have been washed through the back door into Mrs. Taylor's kitchen on the last wave of a seastorm—so forlorn and unfamiliar they appeared, and she turned her head from side to side as though she were sensing quiet and stillness for the first time. . . .

It was late in the afternoon of a hot December day. The sun shone through the drawn blind in long pencil rays of light, over the floor and the face of the dresser and a church calendar picture of a dreamy young Jesus with an armful of lambs; and facing her sat Mrs. Taylor, changing the baby who sprawled on her lap, waving his hands and blowing bubbles. Mrs. Taylor kept on talking to Rose in a vague singing voice. The clock on the mantelpiece ticked sharply and a tap in the scullery tip-tipped like stealthy footsteps.

'Yes, m'm,' said Rose Eagle, and 'No, m'm' to all that Mrs. Taylor said.

'You will share Reggie's room, Rose. Reggie is my oldest boy. He is four and he has just started school. And now that you have come I'll give up having baby at night—he keeps me awake so. You're used to babies?'

'Oh, yes, m'm!'

'I really do not feel well enough to tell you your duties today,' said Mrs. Taylor, languidly sticking safety-pins into the gurgling baby.

Rose Eagle got up and bent over Mrs. Taylor. 'Here,' she said, 'give 'im to me,' and as she straightened herself with the warm, fat lump in her arms, she felt frightened no longer. Baby Taylor

was to Rose Eagle the saucer of milk to the stray cat. The fact of acceptance proved resignation.

'My word! what 'air 'e's got!' said Rose Eagle, cuddling him. 'It's like black feathers.'

Mrs. Taylor rose with her hands to her head. Tall and thin in her lilac cotton dress, she pushed back from her forehead the heaping black hair, with eyes half-shut and quivering lips.

'My! you do look bad!' said Rose, relishing this performance. 'You go an' 'ave a lie down on your bed, m'm, an' I'll bring you a cup o' tea in a minute. I'll manage best ways I can.'

She followed her mistress out of the kitchen, along the little passage, into the best bedroom. 'Lie down! Take yer shoes off!' Mrs. Taylor submitted, sighing, and Rose Eagle tiptoed back into the kitchen.

This story seems to lack coherence and sharpness. That's the principal thing: it's not at all sharp. It's like eating a bunch of grapes instead of a grape of caviare. . . . I have a pretty bad habit of spreading myself at times—of over-writing and under-stating. It's just carelessness.

The New-born Son.

So that mysterious mother, faint with sleep,
Had given into her arms her new-born son,
And felt upon her bosom the cherished one
Breathe and stiffen his tiny limbs and weep.
Her arms became as wings, folding him over
Into that lovely pleasance, and her heart
Beat like a tiny bell: 'He is my lover,
He is my son, and we shall never part.
Never, never, never, never—but why?'
And she suddenly bowed her head and began to cry.

'When we had finished with the album, Von Koren took a pistol from the whatnot, *and screwing up his left eye, took deliberate aim at the portrait of Prince Vorontsov*, or stood still at the looking-glass and gazed a long time at his swarthy face, his big forehead and

his black hair, which curled like a negro's. . . .' (Tchehov: *The Duel.*)

After our return from Bandol in April 1916, *we lived next door to the Lawrences at Higher Tregerthen in North Cornwall, then at Mylor in South Cornwall. In September* 1916 *we came to London.*

[*November* 3 *Gower Street.*] It is so strange! I am suddenly back again, coming into my room and desiring to write, *Knock*, goes Miss Chapman at the door. A man has come to clean the windows. I might have known it!

And so death claims us. I am sure that just at that final moment a knock will come and Somebody Else will come to 'clean the windows'.

Johnnie has given me his fountain pen. The room is full of smoke to-night, the gas bubbles as if the pipes were full of water. It's very quiet. I have rather a cold, but I feel absolutely alive after my experience of this afternoon.

December 8 I thought and thought this morning but to not much avail. I can't think why, but my wit seems to be nearly deserting me when I want to get down to earth. I am all right—sky-high. And even in my brain, in my head, I can think and act and write wonders—wonders; but the moment I really try to put them down I fail miserably.

1917

In the spring of 1917, *Katherine took a studio for herself at* 141*a Church Street, Chelsea, while I had a room near by at* 47 *Redcliffe Road.*

May: Bloc-notes, 1917

In these notes—so help me, Lord,
I shall be open and above board.

Alors, je pars.

It is astonishing how violently a big branch shakes when a silly little bird has left it. I expect the bird knows it and feels immensely arrogant. The way he went on, my dear, when I said I was going to leave him. He was quite desperate. But now the branch is quiet again. Not a bud has fallen, not a twig has snapped. It stands up in the bright air, steady and firm, and thanks the Lord that it has got its evenings to itself again.

A Shilling gone Bust.

A knock at the door. Two sisters of Nazareth—one, rather pretty and meek, in the background, attending; the other very voluble and fluent, her hands in her sleeves. When she smiled, showing her pale gums and big discoloured teeth I decided that I had quite got over my sentimental feeling about nuns. She was collecting for their home for little children. All sorts of little children were admitted except those suffering from infectious diseases or subject to fits. I wondered what would happen if one developed fits after admittance and decided that I should have the most realistic fit the moment the Nazarene door shut on me. . . . I remember you well from last year, said the nun. But I wasn't here last year. Ah, people change so quickly, said she. Yes, but perhaps their faces don't, said I, seriously, giving her the shilling I was just going to put into the gas meter. I wish I had put it into the gas meter five minutes before. . . .

Living Alone.

Even if I should, by some awful chance, find a hair upon my bread and honey—at any rate it is my own hair.

Beware of the Rain!

Late in the evening, after you have cleared away your supper, blown the crumbs out of the book that you were reading, lighted the lamp and curled up in front of the fire, that is the moment to beware of the rain.

E. M. Forster.

Putting my weakest books to the wall last night I came across

a copy of *Howard's End* and had a look into it. But it's not good enough. E. M. Forster never gets any further than warming the teapot. He's a rare fine hand at that. Feel this teapot. Is it not beautifully warm? Yes, but there ain't going to be no tea.

And I can never be perfectly certain whether Helen was got with child by Leonard Bast or by his fatal forgotten umbrella. All things considered, I think it must have been the umbrella.

Love and Mushrooms.

If only one could tell true love from false love as one can tell mushrooms from toadstools. With mushrooms it is so simple—you salt them well, put them aside and have patience. But with love, you have no sooner lighted on anything that bears even the remotest resemblance to it than you are perfectly certain it is not only a genuine specimen, but perhaps *the* only genuine mushroom ungathered. It takes a dreadful number of toadstools to make you realise that life is not one long mushroom.

Babies and the dear old Queen.

Whenever I see babies in arms I am struck again by their resemblance to the dear old Queen. They have just the same air of false resignation, the same mournful, regal plumpness. If only her Majesty had deigned to be photographed in a white woollen bonnet with a little frill of eiderdown round it there'd be no telling the difference. Especially if she could have been persuaded to sit on G'andpa G'adstone's knee for the occasion.

Dreams and Rhubarb.

My sticks of rhubarb were wrapped up in a copy of the *Star* containing Lloyd George's last, *more* than eloquent speech. As I snipped up the rhubarb my eye fell, was fixed and fastened on that sentence wherein he tells us that we have grasped our niblick and struck out for the open course. Pray Heaven there is some faithful soul ever present with a basket to catch these tender blossoms as they fall. Ah, God! it is a dreadful thought that these immortal words should go down into the dreamless dust uncherished. I loved to think, as I put the rhubarb into the saucepan, that years

hence—P.G. many, *many* years hence—when in the fullness of time, full of ripeness and wisdom, the Almighty sees fit to gather him into His bosom, some gentle stone-cutter living his quiet life in the little village that had known great David as a child would take a piece of fair white marble and engrave upon it two niblicks crossed and underneath:

In the hour of England's most imminent peril he grasped his Niblick and struck out for the Open Course.

But what *does* rather worry me, I thought, turning the gas down to a pinch as the rhubarb began to boil, is how these mighty words are to be translated so that our Allies may taste the full flavour of them. Those crowds of patient Russians, waiting in the snow, perhaps, to have the speech read aloud to them—what dreadful weapon will it present to their imagination? Unless *The Daily News* suggests to Mr. Ransome that he walk down the Nevsky Prospekt with a niblick instead of an umbrella for all the world to see. And the French—what *espèce de Niblickisme* will they make of it. Shall we read in the French papers next week of someone *qui manque de niblick*. Or that '*Au milieu de ces évènements si graves ce qu'il nous faut c'est du courage, de l'espoir et du niblick le plus ferme. . . .*' I wondered, taking off the rhubarb.

A Victorian Idyll.

Yesterday Matilda Mason
In the *Parlour* by herself
Broke a *Handsome* China Basin
Placed upon the Mantelshelf.

You picture Matilda in a little check dress, puce shoulder ties, muslin pantalettes, black sandals, and a pound of rich glossy curls like a pound of the good old-fashioned fried sausages, held in place by a velvet band. She tip-toes about the parlour, among the what-nots and antimacassars and embroidery frames and Mamma's workbox with the ivory fittings, and Papa's music stand with the pearl studded flute lying across it. . . . How did she come to be in the parlour by herself? Rash, foolish child! Why was she not sitting upon a bead hassock in the nursery conning over one of

those amiable little tunes for infants from one and a half to three years (Charles: Pray, dear papa! what is the Solar System? Papa: Wipe your nose, Charles, and I will tell you) or embroidering God is Love in red upon a night-dress case for her dear Mamma?

She had parted her Papa's Piccadilly weepers, had been strained to his flashing bosom before he dashed off to that mysterious place, the City, where ladies feared to tread; her Mamma, having seen the doctor's gig draw up at number twelve, had put on her second best pair of jet ear-rings, wrapped herself in her second best cashmere shawl and taken a flask of eau-de-cologne. . . .

May 30 To be alive and to be a 'writer' is enough. Sitting at my table just now I saw one person turning to another, smiling, putting out his hand—speaking. And suddenly I clenched my fist and brought it down on the table and called out—There is *nothing* like it!

The Musician's Daughter.

Kissing in the hail. What should he have done—put the books down or kept them in his hand—or—or? She plays the accompaniments, very serious. She stands at the piano and hits A with one finger, her head bent a little on one side—and she dresses like a child in frocks that button up the back and slippers with no heels. The old man *rumbles*.

August 21 141A *Church St., Chelsea.* I came home this afternoon and Fergusson came in. I was standing in the studio, someone whistled on the path. It was he. I went out and bought some milk and honey and Veda bread. By and by we sat down and had tea and talk. This man is in many ways extraordinarily like me. I like him so much; I feel so *honest* with him that it's simply one of my real joys, one of the real joys of my life, to have him come and talk and be with me. I did not realise, until he was here and we ate together, how much I cared for him—and how much I was really at home with him. A real understanding. We might have spoken a different language—returned from a far country. I just felt all

was well, and we understood each other. Just that. And there was 'ease' between us. There is a division: people who are my people, people who are not my people. He is mine. I gave him for a pledge my little puddock.[1]

When we walked out I saw the sky again after all the day's blindness—little clouds and big clouds. We said good-bye at Vinden's. That is all. But I wanted to make a note of it.

I. They meet and just touch.
II. They come together and part.
III. They are separated and meet again.
IV. They realise their tie.

Summer.

'Et pourtant, il faut s'habituer à vivre,
Même seul, même triste, indifférent et las,
Car, ô ma vision troublante, n'es-tu pas
Un mirage incessant trop difficile à suivre?'

The stories referred to in the following note were never finished. All that remains of them is a few pages from Geneva. *I do not understand the end of the second paragraph. The little boy's remark about the teapot and the kitten appears in* Mr. Reginald Peacock's Day.

Tchehov makes me feel that this longing to write stories of such uneven length is quite justified. *Geneva* is a long story, and *Hamilton* is very short, and this ought to be written to my brother really, and another about the life in New Zealand. Then there is Bavaria. 'Ich liebe Dich, Ich liebe Dich,' floating out on the air . . . and then there is Paris. God! When shall I write all these things and how?

Is that all? Can that be all? That is not what I meant at all.

Tchehov is right about women; yes, he is quite right. These fairies in black and silver—'and then, tearing down the road, her long brown fur blowing behind her, brushing the leaves with her trailing skirt, and crying' Of course he was awfully sorry that

[1]A brass frog which was one of Katherine's treasured possessions.

she did not get satisfaction, just as he would have been awfully sorry if she hadn't liked strawberries and cream.

Friday—Friday—he could not get the word out of his head . . . and before him stood the little man with his hair neatly combed, saying: 'Please take something to eat!" ' But I cannot believe that at this stage of the proceedings something pretty extraordinary did not happen. I sat with my back to no-one.

T.F.; M.F. This woman I know very well—vain, eager, beautiful, *désenchantée*, an 'actress'.

'I can put a little child's bed into the corner.'

'Which do you like best, Daddie,—cats or dogs?'

'Well, I think I like dogs best, old chap.'

'I don't: I'd like to have a kitten about as big as a little tea-pot.'

One character, of the man, rather beats me. I want a very quiet man, absorbed in his work, who, once he realised—really realised—that his wife had married him for her own ends, had no more to do with her, but still loved her and adored the child. It is all a bit difficult to write, but awfully fascinating, and should not be at too great length.

Does this pen write? Oh, I do hope so. For it's really beastly to have a pen that doesn't. And then a clergyman goes up to him and says he has lost the tails off his sheep. Well, it's a comic! You see?

Life is not gay.

. . . But at last she was conscious that a choice had to be made, that before dawn, these shadows would appear less real, making way for something quite different. There was no hesitation now. She simply knew that she wanted him near her, that he was to her the meaning of love and of others—that without him all the world was as a little ball rolling over a dark sky.

Dawn broke, long in coming. She lay in the bed on her back, one arm behind her head, a hand on the counterpane—the window became blue, then suffused with gold light, but when she looked at her watch she was horrified to find that it was only

half-past five o'clock. Hours had to be got through somehow—hours and hours—and you must remember that time was not the sort of thing you could count on at the last to be faithful or to be just. Now it behaved as it liked—it had infinite capacities for lengthening out, for hanging on like a white ribbon of road under your two tired feet—oh, to have done with it! To run like a little child over the long white place, to be there and in his arms!

She went over to the mirror, took off her cap, shook her hair—and once, adorably seeing his eyes watch her, she glanced over her shoulder and smiled—laughingly she powdered her face, rouged her lips, and traced with the tip of her finger her eyebrows. This was not Kezia, this being with . . .

'An author's vanity is vindictive, implacable, incapable of forgiveness; and his sister was the first and only person who had laid bare and disturbed that uneasy feeling, which is like a big box of crockery, easy to unpack but impossible to pack up again as it was before.' (Tchehov: *Excellent People*.)

A Version from Heine.

Countess Julia rowed over the Rhine
In a light boat by clear moonshine.
The waiting maid rowed, the Countess said:
'Do you not see the seven young dead
That behind us follow
In the waters shallow?
(*And the dead swim so sadly!*)

'They were warriors young and gay
And on my bosom they softly lay
And swore to be true. To plight our troth,
That they should never be false to their oath,
I had them bound
Straightway and drowned.'
(*And the dead swim so sadly!*)

The waiting-maid rowed, but loud laughed she;
It rang through the night so dreadfully:

Till at the side the corpses dip
And dive and waggle a finger-tip;
As though swearing, they bow
With ice-glistening brow.
(*And the dead swim so sadly!*)

1918

In November 1917 *Katherine caught a chill, which developed into pleurisy. When she had partly recovered her doctor advised her to go to the South of France.*

She was overjoyed at the prospect. She did not realise, neither did any of her friends, that during the two years since she was last in Bandol conditions in France had utterly changed. Railway travelling was difficult, food bad. And, perhaps most serious of all, she would not admit that she was gravely ill. Her courage and confidence deceived herself as well as her friends. She persuaded herself and them that she was the one to be envied for being sent into the sun.

After an appalling journey, described in one of her letters, she reached Bandol on January 10, 1918, *to find that the little Mediterranean town she remembered so beautiful was now dirty and neglected. From the moment she arrived she was seriously ill and quite alone, until in February her friend, Ida Baker* (*L.M.*), *managed to get to her.*

January [*Bandol.*] 'Better be imprudent moveables than prudent fixtures.' (Keats to Fanny Brawne.)

A woman who is *un peu âgée* and has a youngish man in France shows very plain her jealousy and her desire to keep his attention from wandering. Even if he wants to sleep she takes his arm.

I never feel so comfortable or at ease as when I am holding a pencil. *Note that*, and if you have an embarrassing moment . . .

January 12 'Charming!' thought Frances, smiling, as she pushed her way through the glass doors into the hairdresser's shop. What she meant by 'charming' was her little hand in a white kid glove with thick black stitching, pressed flat on the pane of the swing-door a moment. . . . Madame behind the counter,

smiled back at her, and 'charming, charming' re-echoed in her smile and in her quick brilliant glance which flew over Frances from top to toe.

'Georges is quite ready,' she cried. 'If you will sit down a moment, I will call him.' and while she spoke her smile widened and deepened, until even her black satin dress, her rings, her locket, her jewelled combs seemed to catch a ripple and to flash with it. Even the bottles and jars and bright mirrors of the hairdresser's shop gave it back again.

I shall certainly be able to write in a day or two if this goes on. I am not so wretched to-night.

When I am sitting above the rocks near the edge of the sea, I always fancy that I hear above the plash of the water the voice of two people talking somewhere I know not what. And the talking is always broken by something which is neither laughter nor sobbing, but a low thrilling sound which might be either and is a part of both.

But Lord! Lord! how I do hate the French.

Mademoiselle complains that she has the *pieds glacés*.

'Then why do you wear such pretty stockings and shoes Mademoiselle?' leers Monsieur.

'Eh—o, la—c'est la mode!'

And the fool grins, well content with the idiot answer.

Note: A muff like a hard nut. (Mouse in *Je ne parle pas.*)

(*February*) What happens is that I come in absolutely exhausted, lie down, sit up and sit in a daze of fatigue—a horrible state—until 7 o'clock. I can barely walk—can't think, don't dare to go to sleep because if I do I know I'll lie awake through the night, and that is my horror. Oh, for a *sofa* or a very comfortable armchair—this is always the longing at the back of my mind; and except for that and a feeling of despair at wasting the time I am simply a blank. The pain continues in my left shoulder and is *the* ——. That adds, of course, for finally it becomes intolerable

and drives me to lie on the bed covered over to support it. But these are, *Hard Lines.*

Verses Writ in a Foreign Bed.
Almighty Father of All and Most Celestial Giver,
Who has granted to us thy children a heart and lungs and a liver;
If upon me should descend thy beautiful gift of tongues
Incline not thine Omnipotent ear to my remarks on lungs.

'Toujours fatiguée, Madame?'
'Oui, toujours fatiguée.'
'Je ne me lève pas, Victorine; et le courier?'
Victorine smiles meaningly, 'Pas encore passé.'

February 7 How immensely easier it is to attack an insect that is running away from you than one that is running towards you. The scuttling tribe! Spiders as big as half-crowns, with long gooseberry hairs!

February 18 Re-read MS. of *Love Lies Bleeding*. Wants all re-writing. It's all over the garden-wall at present.

February 19 I woke up early this morning and when I opened the shutters the full round sun was just risen. I began to repeat that verse of Shakespeare's: 'Lo, here the gentle lark weary of rest', and bounded back into bed. The bound made me cough—I spat—it tasted strange—it was bright red blood. Since then I've gone on spitting each time I cough a little more. Oh, yes, of course I'm frightened. But for two reasons only. I don't want to be ill, I mean 'seriously', away from Jack. Jack is the first thought. 2nd, I don't want to find this is real consumption, perhaps it's going to gallop—who knows?—and I shan't have my work written. *That's what matters.* How unbearable it would be to die—leave 'scraps', 'bits' . . . nothing real finished.

But I feel the first thing to do is to get back to Jack. Yes, my right lung hurts me badly, but it always does more or less. But *Jack and my work*—they are all I think of (mixed with curious

visionary longings for gardens in full flower). L.M. has gone for the doctor.

I *knew* this would happen. Now I'll say why. On my way here, in the train from Paris to Marseilles I sat in a carriage with two women. They were both dressed in black. One was big, one little. The little spry one had a sweet smile and light eyes. She was extremely pale, had been ill—was come to repose herself. The big one, as the night wore on, wrapped herself up in a black shawl—so did her friend. They shaded the lamp and started (trust 'em) talking about illnesses. I sat in the corner feeling damned ill myself.

Then the big one, rolling about in the shaking train, said what a *fatal place* this coast is for anyone who is even threatened with lung trouble. She reeled off the most hideous examples, especially one which froze me finally, of an American 'belle et forte avec un simple bronchite' who came down here to be cured and in three weeks had had a severe hæmorrhage and *died*. 'Adieu mon mari, adieu mes beaux enfants.'

This recital, in that dark moving train, told by that big woman swathed in black, had an effect on me that I wouldn't own and never mentioned. I knew the woman was a fool, hysterical, morbid, *but I believed her*; and her voice has gone on somewhere echoing in me ever since. . . .

Juliette[1] has come in and opened the windows; the sea is so full of 'little laughs' and in the window space some tiny flies are busy with their darting, intricate dance.

At last, after many wearing delays, Katherine received permission from the authorities to return to England. On the day, however, on which she reached Paris, March 22, the long-range bombardment of the city began, and all civilian traffic between Paris and London was instantly suspended. For nearly three weeks she was detained in Paris, exhausted by her illness, yet continually having to visit various authorities for permission either to stay or to depart. She managed to get to London

[1]Juliette was the little maid at the hotel Beau Rivage who devoted herself to Katherine. There are many charming pictures of her in the letters of this time.

on April 11, *a shadow of herself. The ravages of four months' anxiety and illness had been terrible.*

April 2 *Paris.* I am not doing what I swore I would at Bandol. I must again write the word

DISCIPLINE

and under that

WHICH DO YOU PREFER?

And from day to day after this keep a strict account of what it is that I fail in. I have failed very badly these last few days and this evening was a *comble. This* to the uninitiated would appear great rubbish. They'd suspect me of God knows what. If only they knew the childish truth! But they won't know. Now, Katherine, here goes for to-morrow—Keep it up, my girl. It's such a chance, now that L.M. is not I-spy-I.

April 3 A *good* day.

He woke, but did not move. Warm and solemn he lay, with wide open troubled eyes, pouting a little, almost frowning for one long moment. In that long moment he sprang out of bed, bathed, dressed, reached the wharf, boarded the ferry boat, crossed the harbour and was waving—waving to Isabel and Maisie who stood there, waiting for him on the pier. A tall young sailor, standing near him, threw a coil of tarred rope and it fell in a long loop, over a landing post. . . . Beautifully done. . . . And all this moment (vision) was so clear and bright and tiny, he might with his flesh and pout and solemn eyes have been a baby watching a bubble.

'I'm there—I'm there. Why do I have to start and do it all so slowly all over again?' But as he thought he moved and the bubble vanished and was forgotten. He sat up in bed smiling, pulling down his pyjama sleeves.

'*Je me repose.*'

April 25 'Well sit down, Mansfield, and *reposez-vous*,' said Fergusson, 'and I'll get on with my dressing.'

So he went into his bedroom and shut the door between, and I sat on the end of the sofa. The sun came full through the two windows, dividing the studio into four—two quarters of light and two of shadow, but all those things which the light touched seemed to float in it, to bathe and to sparkle in it as if they belonged not to land, but to water; they even seemed, in some strange way, to be moving.

When you lean over the edge of the rock and see something lovely and brilliant flashing at the bottom of the sea it is only the clear, trembling water that dances—but—can you be quite sure? . . . No, not quite sure, and that little Chinese group on the writing table may or may not have shaken itself awake for just one hundredth of a second out of hundreds of years of sleep.

Very beautiful, O God! is a blue tea-pot with two white cups attending; a red apple among oranges addeth fire to flame—in the white book-cases the books fly up and down in scales of colour, with pink and lilac notes recurring, until nothing remains but them, sounding over and over.

There are a number of frames, some painted and some plain, leaning against the wall, and the picture of a naked woman with her arms raised, languid, as though her heavy flowering beauty were almost too great to bear. There are two sticks and an umbrella in one corner, and in the fireplace, a kettle, curiously like a bird.

White net curtains hang over the windows. For all the sun it is raining outside. The gas in the middle of the room has a pale yellow paper shade, and as Fergusson dresses he keeps up a constant whistling.

Reposez-vous.

Oui, je me repose. . . .

April 26 If I had my way I should stay in the Redcliffe Road until after the war. It suits me. Whatever faults it has it is not at all bourgeois. There is 'something a bit queer' about all the people who live in it; they are all more or less 'touched'. They walk about without their hats on and fetch and carry their food and even their

coal. There are nearly four bells to every door—the curtains are all 'odd' and shabby. The charwomen, blown old flies, buzz down each other's basements. . . . 'No. 50 'ad a party last night You never seen anything like the stite of 'is room this morning. . . .' '. . . 'Igh time 'e did get married, I say. 'Is fiangse spends the night with 'im already.' 'E says she 'as 'is bed and 'e sleeps on the table. You don't tell me a great stick of a fellow like 'im sleeps on 'is table!'

Question: But do you like this sort of talk? This kind of thing? What about the Poets and—flowers and trees?

Answer: As I can't have the perfect other thing, I *do* like this. I feel, somehow, free in it. It has no abiding place, and neither have I. And—and—Oh well, I *do* feel so cynical.

Since it seemed out of the question that Katherine should remain in my two dark ground-floor rooms in Redcliffe Road, she went on May 17 to Looe in Cornwall, while I searched for a house in Hampstead.

May 21 [*Looe, Cornwall.*] . . . I positively feel, in my hideous modern way, that I can't get into touch with my mind. I am standing gasping in one of those disgusting telephone boxes and I can't 'get through'.

'Sorry. There's no reply,' tinkles out the little voice.

'Will you ring them again—Exchange? A good long ring. There must be somebody there.'

'I can't get any answer.'

Then I suppose there is nobody in the building—nobody at all. Not even an old fool of a watchman. No, it's dark and empty and quiet . . . above all—empty.

Note: A queer thing is that I keep seeing it—this empty building—as my father's office. I smell it as that. I see the cage of the clumsy wooden goods lift and the tarred ropes hanging.

May 22 The sea here is real sea. It rises and falls with a loud noise, has a long, silky roll on it as though it purred, seems sometimes to climb half up into the sky and you see the sail boats perched upon clouds—like flying cherubs.

Hallo! here come two lovers. She has a pinched-in waist, a hat like a saucer turned upside down—he sham panama, hat guard, cane, etc.; his arm enfolding. Walking between sea and sky. His voice floats up to me: 'Of course, occasional tinned meat does not matter, but a perpetual diet of tinned meat is bound to produce . . .'

I am sure that the Lord loves them and that they and their seed will prosper and multiply for ever and ever. . . .

An Idea.

Are you really, only happy when I am not there? Can you conceive of yourself buying crimson roses and smiling at the flower woman if I were within 50 miles of you? Isn't it true that then, even if you were a prisoner—your time is your own . . . even if you are lonely, you are not being 'driven distracted'—Do you remember when you put your handkerchief to your lips and turned away from me—In that instant you were utterly, utterly apart from me—and I have never felt quite the same since. Also —there was the evening when you asked me if I still believed in the Heron.[1] Isn't it perhaps true that if I were 'flourishing' you would flourish—ever so much more easily and abundantly without the strain and wear of my presence. And we should send each other divine letters and divine 'work'—and you would quite forget that I was 29 and brown-eyed. People would ask—is she fair or dark? and you would say in a kind of daze—'Oh, I think her hair's pale yellow.' Well—well, it's not quite a perfect scheme. For I should have to hack off *my* parent *stem* such a branch—oh, such a branch that spreads over you and delights to shade you and to see you in dappled light and to refresh you and carry you a sweet (though quite unrecognised) perfume.

But it is *not* the same for you—you are always pale, exhausted in an anguish of *set* anxiety, as soon as I am near. Now, I feel in your letters, this is going, and you are breathing again. How sad it is! Yes, I've a *shrewd* suspicion . . .

[1]The Heron Farm was the name of the house to which we dreamed of retiring after the war. Heron, or Herron, was a family name in the Beauchamp family.

Of course L.M. will keep us one remove from each other; anxious to keep her? For of course, as you know, I'd have chucked her finally after the Gwynne night if it hadn't been for your eagerness.[1]

(*May* 22. Looe.)

Those of the following phrases which are marked K.M. (*by herself*) *are her own. One or two of the rest may be quotations.*

. . . to meet, on the stopping of the chariot, the august emergence.

The jewel wrapped up in a piece of old silk and negotiable one day in the market of misery.

Luxuriant complications which make the air too tropical. . . .

The sense of folded flowers . . . as though the night had laid its hand upon their hearts and they were folded and at peace like folded flowers. (K.M.)

. . . plucked her sensations by the way, detached, nervously, the small wild blossoms of her dim forest.

The high luxury of not having to explain. . . .

The ostrich burying its head in the sand does at any rate wish to convey the impression that its head is the most important part of it. (K.M. Good.)

Though she did in a way, simply offer herself to me she was so cold, so rich, so splendid, that I simply couldn't see a spoon silver enough to dare help myself with. . . . (K.M.)

If there were going to be large freedoms she was determined to enjoy them too. She wasn't going to be perched, swaying perilous in the changing jungle like a little monkey dropped from a tree on to an elephant's head—and positively clinging to some large ear. (K.M.)

June Looe. A cold day—the cuckoo singing and the sea like liquid metal. Everything feels detached—uprooted—flying through the hurtling air or about to fly. There's almost a sense of having to dodge these unnatural rudderless birds. . . . To use a

[1]Much of this note was embodied in a letter to J.M.M. of the same date.

homely image, imagine the world an immense drying ground, with everything blown off the lines. . . . It is very nervously exhausting.

And the day spent itself. . . . The idle hours blew on it and it shed itself like seed. . . .

She was the same through and through. You could go on cutting slice after slice and you know you would never light on a plum or a cherry—never a piece of peel.

Our friends are only a more or less imperfect embodiment of our ideas.

Feature Extraordinary: Shoes that have never squeaked before start up a squeaking.

Mrs. Honey, in the following note, was the chambermaid in the hotel at Looe, and like most of her servants, devoted to Katherine.

Later.

Mrs. Honey explains. She has been crying. Madame spoke to her 'awful crool' about a cracked tumbler. Lied. Bullied. And the poor old creature, who has had 15 rooms to do lately and three flights of stairs to scrub (age 68) 'couldn't help but cry. . . .'

I wish Madame would develop a tumour during the night, have it cut out to-morrow and be 'dead, buried and a',' before the Sunday dinner. She is exactly like a large cow in a black silk dress —and she will *never*, NEVER, NEVER die.

'If the fire turns bright, your māān is in a good temper.' (Mrs. Honey.)

Later.

I went into John's room just now to put a book there—and turned down the pink bed cover to see if he had enough blankets. As I did so I thought of John as a boy of about 17. I had a sort of *prophetic vision* of doing just the same thing for my son . . . in

years to come. The moment had no emotional value at all—especially as it was all drowned in the smell of roast mutting. There goes the gong: it sounds like a timid fire alarm. But I wait until the first course is done. I wait until the chimpanzees have lapped up their little pool before I start a-nut-cracking wiv 'em.

Later.

The table was laid for two. I dined opposite a white serviette—shaped like a hand with spread fingers. Now I have dressed and am waiting for the motor. I rubbed some *genêt fleuri* on my collar just now: I look *different*—as though I were meant to be played on and not just to lie in a corner, with the bow in that slot opposite which fastens with two buttons. No! Now the bow is hanging from the peg—AT LEAST.

June Paralysis as an idea. A pleasant one. Spinal disease. A stroke. Failure of the Heart's Action. Some 'obscure' Horror.

Looe. Dead before Friday. A cripple—unable to speak. My face all *deformed*. But the top and bottom of this sang-widge is a paralytic stroke—the important middle—heart failure. Well I've cut it for myself and eaten it day after day—day after day. It's an *endless* loaf. . . .

To be read after IT *has happened.*

And I'd like to put on quiet record that the physical pain is just not unbearable—only just not.

At 4.30 to-day it did conquer me and I began, like the Tchehov students, to 'pace from corner to corner'—then up and down, up and down, and the pain *racked* me like a curse and I could hardly breathe. Then I sat down again and tried to take it quietly. But although I've an armchair and a fire and little table all drawn up comfortable I feel too ill to write. I could dictate I think p'raps—but write—no. Trop Malade.

I have been, in addition, waiting for Anne[1] all this afternoon. I thought, even in this storm, she'd 'blow' over. 'Hillo!' And about 100 Annes with quick deliberate steps have walked up this brick path but got no futher. Plus that, I have nothing to read. Hurray!!!

[1]Anne Estelle Rice.

One's 'salvation' would I think be *music*. To have a 'cello again. That I must try. . . .

Thursday, June 20 The twentieth of June 1918.

C'est de la misère.

Non, pas ça exactement. Il y a quelque chose—une profonde malaise me suive comme un ombre.

Oh, why write bad French? Why write at all? 11,500 miles are so many—too many by 11,449¾ for me. [New Zealand is that distance from England.]

Friday, June 21 What is the matter with to-day? It is thin, white, as lace curtains are white, full of ugly noises (e.g. people opening the drawers of a cheap chest and trying to shut them again). All food seems stodgy and indigestible—no drink is hot enough. One looks hideous, hideous in the glass—bald as an egg —one's feet swollen—and all one's clothes are tight. And everything is dusty, gritty—the cigarette ash crumbles and falls—the marigolds spill their petals over the dressing table. In a house nearby someone is trying to tune a cheap cheap piano.

If I had a 'home' and could pull the curtains together, lock the door—burn something sweet, fast, walk round my own perfect room, soundlessly, watching the lights and the shadows—it would be *tolerable*—but living as I do in a public house—it's *très difficile*.

A few of its enormities.

1. I decided to *faire les ongles de mes pieds avant mon petit déjeuner*—and did not—from idleness.

2. The coffee was not hot: the bacon salt, and the plate shewed that it had been fried in a dirty pan.

3. I could not think of any small talk for Mrs. Honey, who seemed silent and distrait—burning with a very feeble wick. . . .

4. John's letter telling of all his immense difficulties—all the impossible things he *must* do before he could start his holiday left me lukewarm. It had somehow a *flat* taste—and I felt rather as tho' I'd read it curiously apart, not united.

5. A vague stomach-ache in my bath.

6. Nothing to read and too rainy to go out.

7. Anne came—and did not ring. I felt she had enough of our friendship for the present. . . .

8. Very bad lunch. A small tough rissole which was no use to the functions and some rather watery gooseberries. I despise terr- ibly English cooking.

9. Went for a walk and was caught in the wind and rain. Terribly cold and wretched.

10. The tea was not hot. I meant *not* to eat the bun but I ate it. *Over-smoked.*

Hotels.

I seem to spend half of my life arriving at strange hotels. And asking if I may go to bed immediately.

'And would you mind filling my hot water bottle? . . . Thank you; that is delicious. No, I shan't require anything more.'

The strange door shuts upon the stranger, and then I slip down in the sheets. Waiting for the shadows to come out of the corners and spin their slow, slow web over the Ugliest Wallpaper of All.

Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

The man in the room next to mine has the same complaint as I. When I wake in the night I hear him turning. And then he coughs. And I cough. And after a silence I cough. And he coughs again. This goes on for a long time. Until I feel we are like two roosters calling to each other at false dawn. From far-away hidden farms.

Jour Maigre.

On Wednesday mornings Mrs. Honey comes into my room as usual and pulls up the blinds and opens the big french windows. Letting in the dancing light and the swish of the sea and the creak of the boats lying at anchor out in the Roads, and the sound of the lawn mower and the smell of cut grass and syringa and the cheeky whistle of that same blackbird.

Then she comes back to my bed and stands over me, one hand pressed to her side, her old face puckered up as though she had some news that she didn't know how to break gently.

''Tis a meatless day,' says she.

Pic-Nic.

When the two women in white came down to the lonely beach—*She* threw away her paintbox—and *She* threw away her notebook. Down they sat on the sand. The tide was low. Before them the weedy rocks were like some herd of shaggy beasts huddled at the pool to drink and staying there in a kind of stupor.

Then *She* went off and dabbled her legs in a pool thinking about the colour of flesh under water. And *She* crawled into a dark cave and sat there thinking about her childhood. Then they came back to the beach and flung themselves down on their bellies, hiding their heads in their arms. They looked like two swans.

Grownupedness.

Four o'clock. Is it light now at four o'clock? I jump out of bed and run over to the window. It is half-light, neither black nor blue. The wing of the coast is violet; in the lilac sky there are dark banners and little black boats manned by black shadows put out on the purple water.

Oh! how often I have watched this hour when I was a girl! But then—I stayed at the window until I grew cold—until I was icy—thrilled by something—I did not know what. Now I fly back into bed, pulling up the clothes, tucking them into my neck. And suddenly my feet find the hot water bottle. Heavens! it is still beautifully warm. That really *is* thrilling.

Dame Seule.

She is little and grey, with a black velvet band round her hair, false teeth, and skinny little hands coming out of frills like the frills on cutlets.

As I passed her room one morning I saw her 'worked' brush-and-comb bag and her Common Prayerbook.

Also, when she goes to the 'Ladies', for some obscure reason she wears a little shawl. . . .

At the dining table, smiling brightly:—'This is the first time I have ever travelled alone, or stayed by myself in a Strange Hotel. But my husband does not mind. As it is so Very Quiet. Of course,

if it were a Gay Place——' And she draws in her chin, and the bead chain rises and falls on her vanished bosom.

Remembrance.

Always, when I see foxgloves, I think of the Lawrences.

Again I pass in front of their cottage, and in the window—between the daffodil curtains with the green spots—there are the great, sumptuous blooms.

'And how beautiful they are against whitewash!' cry the Lawrences.

As is their custom, when they love anything, they make a sort of Festa. With foxgloves everywhere. And then they sit in the middle of them, like blissful prisoners, dining in an encampment of Indian Braves.

Strawberries and a Sailing Ship.

We sat on the top of the cliff overlooking the open sea, our backs turned to the little town. Each of us had a basket of strawberries. We had just bought them from a dark woman with quick eyes—berry-finding eyes.

'They're fresh picked,' said she, 'from our own garden.'

The tips of her fingers were stained a bright red. But what strawberries! Each one was the finest—the perfect berry—the strawberry Absolute—the fruit of our childhood! The very air came fanning on strawberry wings. And down below, in the pools, little children were bathing, with strawberry faces. . . .

Over the blue, swinging water, came a three-masted sailing-ship—with nine, ten, eleven sails. Wonderfully beautiful! She came riding by as though every sail were taking its fill of the sun and the light.

And: 'Oh how I'd love to be on board!' said Anne.

(The captain was below, but the crew lay about, idle and handsome. 'Have some strawberries!' we said, slipping and sliding on the rocking decks, and shaking the baskets. They ate them in a kind of dream. . . .)

And the ship sailed on. Leaving us in a kind of dream, too. With the empty baskets. . . .

At the beginning of July Katherine returned to Redcliffe Road. On August 26, we moved into No. 2 Portland Villas, East Heath Road, Hampstead.

July 5 [47 *Redcliffe Road.*] To-day, this evening, after I have come home (for I must go out and buy some fruit) commence encore une vie nouvelle. Turn over and you'll see how good I become—a different child.

Later I have read—given way to reading—two books by Octave Mirbeau—and after them I see dreadfully and finally, (1) that the French are a filthy people, (2) that their corruption is so *puante*—I'll not go near 'em again. No, the English couldn't stoop to this. They aren't human; they are in the good old English parlance—*monkeys*.

I must start writing again. They decide me. Something must be put up against this.

Ach. Tchehov! why are you dead? Why can't I talk to you, in a big darkish room, at late evening—where the light is green from the waving trees outside. I'd like to write a series of *Heavens*: that would be one.

I must not forget my *timidity* before closed doors. My debate as to whether I shall ring too loud or not loud enough. . . . It's deep deep deep: in fact it is the 'explanation' of the failure of K.M. as a writer up to the present, and Oh! what a good *Anfang zu einem Geschichte!*

The Eternal Question.

I pose myself, yet once more, *my* Eternal Question. What is it that makes the moment of delivery so difficult for me? If I were to sit down—now—and just to write out, plain, some of the stories—all written, all ready, in my mind 'twould take me days. There are so many of them. I sit and *think* them out, and if I overcome my lassitude and *do* take the pen they ought (they are so word perfect) to write themselves. But it's the activity. I haven't a place to write in or on—the chair isn't comfortable—yet even as I complain *this* seems the place and *this* the chair. And don't I want to write them? Lord! Lord! it's my only desire—my one *happy*

issue. And only yesterday I was thinking—even my present state of health is a great gain. It makes things so rich, so important, so longed for . . . changes one's focus.

. . . When one is little and ill and far away in a remote bedroom all that happens *beyond* is marvellous. . . . Alors, I am always in that remote bedroom. Is that why I seem to see, this time in London—nothing but what is marvellous—marvellous—and incredibly beautiful?

C'est très ennuyeux, maintenant, parceque cette femme arriverait chez moi et je ne. . . .

Elle n'est pas arrivée!

The 'tide' is full in the Redcliffe Road. One by one the doors have opened, have slammed shut. Now, in their blind way, the houses are fed. That poor little violin goes on, tearing up note after note—there is a strange dazzling white cloud over the houses and a pool of blue.

Evening Primrose.

'All my virtues—all my rich nature—gone,' she said, 'grown over, tangled, forgotten, deserted like a once upon a time garden.' She smiled and pulled down her hat and pulled her coat together as though making ready to stumble out into it and be lost too. 'A dark place,' said she, wavering to her feet. And then she smiled again. 'Perhaps there *is* just left my—my—curiosity about myself. Evening Primrose. . . .' She half shut her eyes, stooping forward curiously as though the plant had sprung up at her feet.' I always did hate evening primroses. They *sound* such darlings, but when you see one they're such weedy, shabby—flower on the grave without a grave stone—sort of things—I don't mean anything symbolical by that,' said she, 'God forbid!' and was gone.

The Middle of the Note.

Whenever I have a conversation about Art which is more or less interesting I begin to wish to God I could destroy all that I have

written and start again: it all seems like so many 'false starts'. Musically speaking, it is not—has not been—in the middle of the note—you know what I mean? When, on a cold morning perhaps, you've been playing and it has sounded all right—until suddenly, you *realise* you are warm—you have only just begun to play. Oh, how badly this is expressed! How confused and even ungrammatical!

Now the day was divine—warm, soft sunshine lay upon her arms and breast like velvet—tiny clouds, silver ones, shone upon the dazzling blue—the garden trees were full of gold light—and a strange brightness came from the houses—from the open windows with their fairy curtains and flower pots . . . the white steps and the narrow spiked railings.

Maisie—the student—their lodgers—she risks anything.

The little leaf that blows in—her memory of the park and crocodile—then there must be her cat called *Millie*. That quick *Hook on, dear girl*—and the pain so great that she almost sobs. But nothing happens—

> Nay, though my heart should break,
> I would not bind you.

Miss Ruddick who always plays with her music propped against the towel rail, and whenever she pulls out her handkerchief out comes an end of resin gummed on a flannel as well.

The Redcliffe Road.

On these summer evenings the sound of the steps along the street is quite different. They knock-knock-knock along, but lightly and easily, as if they belonged to people who were walking home at their ease, after a procession or a pic-nic or a day at the sea.

The sky is pale and clear: the silly piano is overcome and reels out waltzes—old waltzes, spinning, drunk with sentiment—gorged with memory.

This is the hour when the poor underfed dog appears, at a run,

nosing the dry gutter. He is so thin that his body is like a cage on four wooden pegs. His lean triangle of a head is down, his long straight tail is out, and up and down, up and down he goes, silent and fearfully eager. The street watches him from its creeper-covered balconies, from its open windows—but the fat lady on the ground floor who is no better than she should be comes out, down the steps to the gate, with a bone. His tail, as he waits for her to give it him, bangs against the gate post, like a broom-handle—and the street says she's a fool to go feeding strange dogs. Now she'll never be rid of him.

(What I'd like to convey is that, at this hour, with this half light and the pianos and the open, empty sounding houses, he is the spirit of the street—running up and down, poor dog, when he ought to have been done away with years ago.)

August 2 Her heart had not spoken. . . . When it does—too late—the pain of it. I ought to have felt like this—often, often. . . .

Inconsequence.

'Did M. wear a grey dressing gown with a dark red piping?' she asked.

'No, he was dressed.'

'Oh! Then I suppose he was *very* dressed; he always is.'

That made her think, suddenly, of another friend of his—a young, fattish man who wore spectacles and was extremely serious, with a kind of special fatness that she had noticed went with just that kind of seriousness. She saw him standing by a wash-table drying his neck—and she saw his braces—tight, and the neckband of his shirt. His hair was, as usual, too long.

'How awful S. must be without a collar!'

'Without a collar?' He looked at her; he almost gasped.

'Yes, in a shirt and trousers.'

'In a shirt and trousers!' he exclaimed. 'I've never seen him in them—'

'No—but— Oh, well—'

He positively fixed her at that.

'How *extraordinarily* inconsequential you are!'

And all in a minute she was laughing.

'Well,' she said, 'men are——'

And she looked out of the window at the tall poplar, with its whispering leaves, with its beautiful top, gold in the last sunlight.

On the wall of the kitchen there was a shadow, shaped like a little mask with two gold slits for eyes. It danced up and down.

September 20 My fits of temper are really terrifying. I had one this (Sunday) morning and tore up a page of the book I was reading—and absolutely lost my head. Very significant. When it was over J. came in and stared. 'What is the matter? What have you done?'

'Why?'

'You look *all dark*.' He drew back the curtains and called it an effect of light, but when I came into my studio to dress I saw it was not that. I was a deep earthy colour, *with pinched eyes*. I was *green*. Strangely enough these fits are Lawrence and Frieda over again. I am more like L. than anybody. We are *unthinkably* alike, in fact.

It is a dark, reluctant day. The fire makes a noise like a flag—and there is the familiar sound from below of someone filling buckets. I am very stiff, very unused to writing now, and yet, as I sit here, it's as though my dear one, my ONLY one, came and sat down opposite me and gazed at me across the table. And I think suddenly of the verses which seemed so awfully good in my girlhood.

Others leave me—all things leave me,
You remain.

L.M. in her turban with her one big eye and one little one. Do I love her? Not really. And then, just now, I mounted to J.'s room and opened the door. He was sitting at the table, working. All was in indescribable disorder, and the air was thick with smoke. He held out his hand to me, but it was not my place. Oh no! I came away.

I came away back to my room which really had for me a touch

of fairy. Is there anything better than my room? Anything outside? The kitten says not—but then it's such a hunting ground for the kitten; the sun throws the shape of the window on to the carpet, and in these four little square fields the silly flies wander, ever so spied upon by the little lion under the *sommier* frill. . . .

Oh dear—Oh dear—*where* are my people? With whom have I been happiest? With nobody in particular. It has all been mush of a mushness.

Later That kitten took sick, was taken away, lived two weeks in great torture, then for two days it lost the will to live. It became just a cotton reel of fur with two great tearful eyes: 'Why has this happened to me?' So the vet. killed it. It had gastric trouble, acute constipation, with a distended belly, and canker in both ears. The two days before it went away it suffered hell. I bought it a ball and it tried to play a little—but no! It couldn't even wash itself. It came up to me, stood on its hind legs, opened its little jaws and *tried* to mew. No sound came; I never saw anything more pitiful.

September 30 I hope this pen works. Yes, it does.

The last day in September—*immensely* cold, a kind of solid cold outside the windows. My fire has played traitor nearly all day, and I have been, in the good, old-fashioned way, feeling my skin *curl*.

Don't read this. Do you hear that train whistle and now the leaves—the dry leaves—and now the fire—fluttering and creaking.

Why *doesn't* she bring the lamps?

So it is to be a baked meat pudding with a caper or twain, and then the rusks cooked in milk with blackberry sauce. Talking of it made us quite friendly after the Fight of the Lamps.

October It is remarkable how much there is of the ordinary man in J. For instance, finding no towels in his room to-night, his indignation, sense of injury, desire so to shut his door that it would bring the house down—his fury in fact at having to look for the

blasted things—all was just precisely what one would have expected of his Father. . . . It makes me think again of the separation of the *Artist* and the *Man*.

It's like his *Why is lunch late?* as though I had but to wave my hand and the banquet descended. But doesn't that prove how happy he would have been with a real WIFE!

"'Tis thus:
Who tells me true, though in his tale lay death,
I hear him as he flattered.'

'If I were to follow all your instructions and advice, I don't think I should have any pleasure in life at all.'

Why do people always put on such airs when they are saying Goodbye? They seem so exquisitely glad to be staying. Are they? Or is it envy?

This is J.'s fountain pen and I don't think much of it. It's all on one side!

The trees will toss their little leaves
To mourn the loss of the new goldfinch.

'The insolence of wealth is a wretched thing, but the conceit of parts has some foundation.' (Dr. Johnson.)

'A temporary poem always entertains us.'

Dr. Johnson: 'So does the account of the criminals hanged yesterday entertain us.'

Criticism.

'Nobody has the right to put another under such a difficulty that he must either hurt the person by telling the truth or hurt himself by telling what is not true. . . . Therefore a man who is asked by an author what he thinks of his work is put to the torture, and is not obliged to speak the truth; so that what he says is not considered as his opinion, yet he has said it and cannot retract his opinion.' (*Dr. Johnson.*)

Self-depreciation.

Dr. Johnson: 'All censure of a man's self is oblique praise. It is in order to show how much he can spare. It has all the invidiousness of self-praise, and all the reproach of falsehood.'

Boswell: 'Sometimes it may proceed from a man's strong consciousness of his faults being observed. He knows that others would throw him down, and he had better lie down softly, of his own accord.'

Dr. Johnson: 'It is thus that mutual cowardice keeps us in peace. Were one half of mankind brave and one half cowards, the brave would be always beating the cowards. Were all brave, they would lead a very uneasy life; all would be continually fighting; but all being cowards, we get on together very well.'

Wine.

S: So, sir, wine is a key which opens a box, and this box may be either full or empty.

J: Nay, sir, conversation is the key; wine is a pick-lock which forces open the box and injures it. A man should cultivate his mind so as to have that confidence and readiness without wine, which wine gives.

October 21 This is simply the most *Divine Spot*. So remote, so peaceful; full of colour, full of Autumn; the sunset is real, and the sound of somebody splitting small wood is real, too. If only one could live up here for really a long time and not have to see anybody.... It might very well be France, it's much more like France than it is like England.

> The place—remote—the dresses and scarves old;
> The year,—fruitful—their talk and laughter gay.

October 24 Ida is going to town. I must take some of my dear money out of the Bank and give it her. I am in bed; I feel very sick. Queer altogether—decomposing a bit. It's a pale, silent day: I should like to be walking in a wood, far away.

Health seems to me now more remote than anything—un-

attainable. Best to stay in bed and be horrid from there. This sky in waves of blue and cream and grey is like the sky overhanging a dead calm sea, when you hear someone rowing, from far away; and then the voices from the boat and the rattle of the chain and the barking of the ship's dog all sound loud. There is as usual a smell of onions and chop bones in the house. Perhaps L.M. is just frying something in the pan 'for the sake of the nice, savoury smell' while she washes up.

What do I want her to buy for me? When it really becomes an urgent matter—I want *nothing*—waste of money—I feel like Mlle. Séguin, who wouldn't hang the pictures in her new flat because *Life is such a breath, little Dolly.*

October Hampstead. I ought to write something brief for the *Nation* to-day and earn a bit more money, a 'Little Lunch at the Club' or something of that kind. It's not difficult; in fact it is too easy for me because if I do err more on one side than t'other—I'm over-fluent.

This view from the window is simply superb—the pale sky and the half bare trees. It's so beautiful it might be the country—*Russian* country as *I* see it.

No, Lawrence and Murry will *never* hit it off. They are both too proud, and M. is too jealous. He is like a hawk over his possessions.

I never connected until to-day—*sang froid* with Cold blood. This is a word which is one of New Zealand's queer 'uns, like calling the Savoy the Sāvoy—or talking of the aryeighted bread shops. Sagn frēūd.

(I am very greatly surprised that on the first day of the New Regime I.C.B. should be late.)

October 25 She *has* large appetites but they can be satisfied—except when we've really got her—herself somehow or other in the soup tureen. Then she could—Oh! she *would*—eat for ever—and

Try this little bit, Jones? Don't you like it? What's the matter with it? Hasn't it got enough flavour—

Caution.

Said the snail,
In delicate armour of silver mail:
'Before too late
I must know my fate,
I must crawl
Along the wall,
Succeed or fall.'
Timid, cautious, one fine morn
She put forth one quivering horn.
Something bit her—
No—hit her.
She expired—
No—retired.
Two ants
Carrying a grain of chaff
Stopped to laugh.
'Come out! Come out!
That hit on the snout
Was only a seed
Blown by some weed.
You haven't begun
To have any fun.'
'But I've had my fright,
That's Life enough—quite!'
Said the snail.

(*November*, 1918.)

The Butterfly.

'What a day to be born!
And what a place!'
Cried the flowers.
'Mais tu as de la chance, ma chère!'
Said the wild geranium
Who was very travelled.
The campions, the blue-bells,

The daisies and buttercups,
The bright little eyebright and the white nettle-flower,
And a thousand others—
All were there to greet her;
And growing so high, so high,
Right up to the sky, thought the butterfly,
On either side of a little lane.
'Only, my dear,' breathed an old snail
Who was hugging the underside of a dock-leaf,
'Don't attempt to cross over.
Keep to this side.
The other side is just the same as this—
Believe me—just the same flowers, just the same greenness.
Stay where you are, and have your little flutter in peace!'
That was enough for the butterfly.
'What an idea! Never to go out into the open?
Never to venture forth?
To live, creeping up and down this side!'
Her wings quivered with scorn.
'Really,' said she, 'I am not a snail!'
And away she flew.
But just at that moment a dirty-looking dog,
Its mean tail between its legs,
Came loping down the lane.
It just glanced aside at the butterfly—did not bite—
Just gave a feeble snap and ran further.
But she was dead.
Little fleck of cerise and black,
She lay in the dust.
Everybody was sorry except the bracken,
Which never cares about anything, one way or the other.

(*November*, 1918.)

The Ladies Club in Wartime.

Ladies to the Centre: A round hall, very dim, lighted from above. A loud, reluctant (swing glass) door that can't bear people

trying to burst their way in and loathes people trying to burst their way out. To one side of the door the porter's cave dotted with pigeon holes, and a desk, a telephone, and usually a big tea-stained china tea cup crowned with its saucer. In front of it a squeaking revolving chair with a torn imitation leather seat.

Good-night.

And once again the door opened, and she passed as it were into another world—the world of night, cold, timeless, inscrutable.

Again she saw the beautiful fall of the steps, the dark garden edged with fluttering ivy—on the other side of the road the huge bare willows—and above them the sky big and bright with stars.

Again there came that silence that was a question—but this time she did not hesitate. She moved forward, very softly and gently —as though fearful of making a ripple in that boundless pool of quiet. She put her arm round her friend. The friend is astonished —murmurs 'It has been so nice.' The other—'Good-night, *dear friend.*' A long tender embrace. Yes, that was it—of course that was what was wanting.

The Blow.

'I'—like a blow on her heart—'I have come—for——'

She leaned against the door, quite faint.

'Yes?' said she.

'This—,' tightly, quickly, he caught her up into his arms.

November 28, 1918 L.M. and I are really the bitterest enemies imaginable. I stand for all she *hates* in Life, and she for all that I *detest.* When I leave her this time, we must see each other no more.

The Fly.

December 31 4.45 p.m. Oh, the times when she had walked upside down on the ceiling, run up glittering panes, floated on a lake of light, flashed through a shining beam!

And God looked upon the fly fallen into the jug of milk and saw that it was good. And the smallest Cherubim and Seraphim of all, who delight in misfortune, struck their silver harps and shrilled: 'How is the fly fallen, fallen!'

1919

January 1 J. came to bed at ten minutes to twelve. Said he: 'Don't go to sleep before the New Year.' I lay holding my watch. I think I did go to sleep for a moment. The window was wide open and I looked out and over a big soft hollow, with a sprinkle of lights between. Then the hour struck: the bells rang—hooter, sirens, horns, trumpets sounded. The church organ pealed out (reminding me of Hans Andersen) and an Australian called *Coo—ee*. (I longed to reply.) I wanted L.M. to hear and to see. I called loudly to her ever so many times, but she had 'chosen' to take a bath. . . . J. was very chagrined because I thought of her, and not only of him. That rather spoiled his New Year. We ought to have clasped. . . .

May 19 6 p.m. I wish I had some idea of how old this note book is. The writing is very faint and far away. Now it is May 1919. Six o'clock. I am sitting in my own room thinking of Mother: I want to cry. But my thoughts are beautiful and full of gaiety. I think of *our* house, *our* garden, *us* children—the lawn, the gate, and Mother coming in. 'Children! Children!' I really only ask for time to write it all—time to write my books. Then I don't mind dying. I live to write. The lovely world (God, how lovely the external world is!) is there and I bathe in it and am refreshed. But I feel as though I had a DUTY, someone has set me a task which I am bound to finish. Let me finish it: let me finish it without hurrying—leaving all as fair as I can. . . .

My little Mother, my star, my courage, my *own*. I seem to dwell in her now. We live in *the same world*. Not quite this world, not quite another. I do not care for people: and the idea of fame, of being a success,—that's nothing, less than nothing. I love my family and a few others dearly, and I love, in the old—in the ancient way, through and through, my husband.

Not a soul knows where she is. She goes slowly, thinking it all over, wondering how she can express it *as she wants to*—asking for time and for peace.

May 21 *Tuesday night.* Temperature 101·2. Severe pain in lung. Had a prolonged coughing attack and brought up blood. Slept very little on account of cough; expectoration streaked with blood.

May 22 *Wednesday morning.* Temperature 100·2. Cough troublesome: signs of blood persist till noonday. Severe pain in lung and feel very cold and nauseated. Shivered all the afternoon, but temperature 101. Lung still very painful at each breath.

Escape.

She was sure I would be cold, and as usual tried to make of my departure une petite affaire sérieuse. I always try to thieve out, steal out. I should like to let myself down from a window, or just withdraw like a ray of light.

'Are you sure you won't have your cape . . . etc., etc., etc.?'

Her attitude made me quite sure. I went out. At the corner the flying, gay, eager wind ran at me. It was too much to bear. I went on for a yard or two, shivering—then I came home. I slipped the Yale key into the lock, like a thief—shut the door *dead* quiet. Up came old L.M., up the stairs.

'So it *was* too cold, after all!'

I couldn't answer or even look at her. I had to turn my back and pull off my gloves. Said she:

'I have a blouse-pattern here I want to show you.'

At that I crept upstairs, came into my room, and shut the door. It was a miracle she did not follow. . . .

What is there in all this to make me HATE her so? What do you see? She has known me try to get in and out without anyone knowing it dozens of times—that is true. I have even *torn* my heart out and told her how it hurts my last little defences to be questioned—how it makes me feel just for the moment, an independent being, to be allowed to go and come unquestioned. But that is just Katie's 'funniness'. She doesn't mean it, of course. . . .

We hardly spoke at lunch. When it was over she asked me again if she might show me the pattern. I felt so ill; it seemed to me that even a hen could see at a side glance of its little leaden

eye how ill I felt. I don't remember what I said. But in she came and put before me—something. Really, I hardly know what it was. 'Let the little dressmaker help you,' I said. But there was nothing to say.

She murmured: 'Purple chiffon front neck sleeves.' I don't know. Finally I asked her to take it away.

'What *is* it, Katie? Am I interrupting your work?'

'Yes, we'll call it that.'

Being Alone.

Saturday This joy of being alone. What is it? I feel so gay and at peace—the whole house takes the air. Lunch is ready. I have a baked egg, apricots and cream, cheese straws and black coffee. How delicious! A baby meal! Mother shares it with me. Athenæum is asleep and then awake on the studio sofa. He has a silver spoon of cream—then hides under the sofa frill and puts out a paw for my finger. I gather the dried leaves from the plant in the big white bowl, and because I *must* play with something, I take an orange up to my room and throw it and catch it as I walk up and down. . . .

This note appears later, re-written, in the following form.

Saturday Peaceful and gay. The whole house takes the air. Athenæum is asleep and then awake on the studio sofa. He has a silver spoonful of my cream at lunch time—then hides under the sofa frill and plays the Game of the Darting Paw. I gather the dried leaves from the plant in the big white bowl; they are powdered with silver. There is nobody in the house, and yet whose is this faint whispering? On the stairs there are tiny spots of gold—tiny footprints. . . .

Geraniums.

The red geraniums have bought the garden over my head. They are there, established, back in the old home, every leaf and flower unpacked and in its place—and quite determined that no power on earth will ever move them again. Well, *that* I don't

mind. But why should they make me feel a stranger? Why should they ask me every time I go near: 'And what are *you* doing in a London garden?' They burn with arrogance and pride. And I am the little Colonial walking in the London garden patch—allowed to look, perhaps, but not to linger. If I lie on the grass they positively shout at me: 'Look at her, lying on *our* grass, pretending she lives here, pretending this is her garden, and that tall back of the house, with the windows open and the coloured curtains lifting, is her house. She is a stranger—an alien. She is nothing but a little girl sitting on the Tinakori hills and dreaming: "I went to London and married an Englishman, and we lived in a tall grave house with red geraniums and white daisies in the garden at the back." *Im*-pudence!'

This note appears later, re-written, in the following form.

The red geraniums have bought the garden over my head and taken possession. They are settled in, every leaf and flower unpacked and in its place, and never do they mean to move again! Well—that I could bear. But why because I've let them in should they throw me out? They won't even let me lie on the grass without their shouting: '*Im*-pudence!'

A Dream.

Sometimes I glance up at the clock. Then I know I am expecting Chummie. The bell peals. I run out on to the landing. I hear his hat and stick thrown on to the hall-table. He runs up the stairs, three at a time. 'Hullo, darling!' But I can't move—I can't move. He puts his arm round me, holding me tightly, and we kiss—a long, firm, family kiss. And the kiss means: We are of the same blood; we have absolute confidence in each other; we love; all is well; nothing can ever come between us.

We come into my room. He goes over to the glass. 'By Jove, I am hot.' Yes, he is very hot. A deep childish colour shows in his cheeks, his eyes are brilliant, his lips burn, he strokes the hair back from his forehead with the palm of his hand. I pull the curtains together and the room is shadowy. He flings himself down on the

sommier and lights a cigarette, and watches the smoke, rising so slowly.

'Is that better?' I ask.

'Perfect, darling—simply perfect. The light reminds me of . . .'

And then the dream is over and I begin working again.

England.

The two brothers were on one side of the room, I on the other. R. sat on the floor inclined towards J. J. lay on the stickle-back,[1] very idly.

'If you could have your wish, where would you be?'

First he thought a café in some foreign town . . . in Spain . . . no, in Grenoble, perhaps . . . sitting listening to music and watching the people. We are just passing through. . . . There is a lake and a river near. . . . But then, NO. A farmhouse in Sussex—some good old furniture—knocking about in the garden—rolling the lawn, perhaps—yes, rolling the lawn. An infant—two good servants. And then, when it grew dark—to go in, have some milk, then I go to my study and you to yours and work for about an hour and a half and then trundle off to bed. I would like to earn my living, but *not* by writing. I feel that my talent as a writer isn't a great one—I'll have to be careful of it. . . . Yes, that's what I'd like. No new places—no new things. I don't *want* them. Would you like that?

I felt his brother was with him, the brother inclined towards him, understanding and sharing that life—the homestead on the Downs—his English country—the sober quiet. . . .

'Would you like that?'

No, I don't want that. No, I don't want England. England is of no use to me. What do I mean by that? I mean there never has been—never will be—any rapprochement between us, *never*. There is the inexplicable fact that I love my typical English husband for all the strangeness between us. I *do* lament that he is not warm, ardent, eager, full of quick response, careless, spendthrift of himself, vividly alive, *high-spirited*. But it makes no difference

[1] A little bergère sofa of Katherine's.

to my love. But the lack of these qualities in his country I HATE—These and others—the lack of its *appeal*—that is what I chiefly hate. I would not care if I never saw the English country again. Even in its flowering I feel deeply antagonistic to it, and I will never change.

R., I believe, through his sensitive love for J., felt this. They were of one nation, I of another, as we sat talking. I felt R. offered himself to his brother, in my stead.

'Tom was literally rolling in wealth. He had, besides the things I have mentioned, twelve marbles, part of a jew's harp, a piece of blue bottle-glass to look through, a spool-cannon, a key that wouldn't unlock anything, a fragment of chalk, a glass stopper of a decanter, a tin soldier, a couple of tadpoles, *a kitten with only one eye . . .*' (Mark Twain: *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer.*)

Not true!

Sunset.

A beam of light was shaken out of the sky
On to the brimming tide, and there it lay,
Palely tossing like a creature condemned to die
Who had loved the bright day.

'Ah, who are these that wing through the shadowy air?'
She cries, in agony. 'Are they coming for me?'
The big waves croon to her: 'Hush now! There-now-there!
There is nothing to see.'

But her white arms lift to cover her shining head,
And she presses close to the waves to make herself small . . .
On their listless knees the beam of light lies dead
And the birds of shadow fall.

A Good Beginning.

May 30 First comes L.M. I give her orders. Ask her to supervise the maid till Monday. 'Be gentle with her: help her to make the beds; and just tell her how everything must be.' Then in detail I sketch out the maid's programme. 'Send Ralph, please.' Ralph

arrives. I arrange the food. Then settle all that must be done, coercing Ralph, putting her mind in order if I can, making her see the bright side of things, sending her away (I hope) feeling important and happy.

I go upstairs to see Maud, to say good-morning, to hope 'she will be happy'. 'Just take things gently; I'll quite understand you can't get into our ways at once. Ask Miss B. and the cook for what you want. But if you wish to see me, don't hesitate to come in. I was so glad you were early.' She was very reassured. Her eyes shone (she's only a little girl). She said it was like the country. As she walked up from the tram the birds sang 'something beautiful'. This instead of the 'long drag up the hill' was cheering. I left her happy. I know I did.

Downstairs just to say Good-day to Mrs. Moody and to say there were some flowers for her to take home. The good creature was on her knees polishing and saying it was such a fine day. Bless her 60 years! We had a little joke or two and I came away.

Ida again—just for a moment to say: 'As you have a machine, don't hem dusters by hand as I see you are doing. Keep your energies for something *important*!'

Then I sit down to work, and there comes a steady, pleasant vibration from the ship. All goes well for the moment. If only I could always control these four women like this! I must learn to.

The Angel of Mercy.

May The day the housemaid had to leave because her husband 'didn't want her to work no more' and, to consolidate his authority, had punched her so hard in the neck that she had a great red swelling under ear, the cook became a kind of infallible being,—an angel of mercy. Nothing was too much for her. Stairs were rays of light up which she floated. She wore her cap differently: it gave her the air of a hospital nurse. Her voice changed. She suggested puddings as though they were compresses: whiting, because they were so 'delicate and harmless'. Trust me! Lean on me! There is nothing I cannot do! was her attitude. Every time she left me, she left me for her mysterious reasons—to lay out the

body again and again—to change the stiffened hand—to pull the paper frill over the ominous spot appearing.

May 31 *Work.* Shall I be able to express, one day, my love of work—my desire to be a better writer—my longing to take greater pains. And the passion I feel. It takes the place of religion—it *is* my religion—of people—I create my people: of 'life'—it *is* Life. The temptation is to kneel before it, to adore, to prostrate myself, to stay too long in a state of ecstasy before the *idea* of it. I must be more busy about my master's business.

Oh, God! The sky is filled with the sun, and the sun is like music. The sky is full of music. Music comes streaming down these great beams. The wind touches the harp-like trees, shakes little jets of music—little shakes, little trills from the flowers. The shape of every flower is like a sound. My hands open like five petals. Praise Him! Praise Him! No, I am overcome; I am dazed; it is too much to bear.

A little fly has dropped by mistake into the huge sweet cup of magnolia. Isaiah (or was it Elisha?) was caught up into Heaven in a chariot of fire *once*. But when the weather is divine and I am free to work, such a journey is positively nothing.

The Cook.

The cook is evil. After lunch I trembled so that I had to lie down on the sommier—thinking about her. I meant—when she came up to see me—to say *so much* that she'd have to go. I waited, playing with the wild kitten. When she came, I said it all, and more, and *she* said how sorry she was and agreed and apologised and quite understood. She stayed at the door, plucking at a d'oyley. 'Well, I'll see it doesn't happen in future. I *quite* see what you mean.

So the serpent still slept between us. Oh! why won't she turn and speak her mind. This pretence of being fond of me! I believe she thinks she is. There is something in what Ida says: she is not consciously evil. She is a FOOL, of course. I have to do all the managing and all the explaining. I have to cook everything before she cooks it. I believe she thinks she is a treasure . . . no, wants to

think it. At bottom she knows her corruptness. There are moments when it comes to the surface, comes out, like a stain, in her face. Then her eyes are like the eyes of a woman-prisoner—a creature looking up as you enter her cell and saying: 'If you'd known what a hard life I've had you wouldn't be surprised to see me here.'

This appears again in the following form.

Cook to See Me.

As I opened the door, I saw her sitting in the middle of the room, hunched, still. . . . She got up, obedient, like a prisoner when you enter a cell. And her eyes said, as a prisoner's eyes say, 'Knowing the life I've had, I'm the last to be surprised at finding myself here.'

The Cook's Story.

Her first husband was a pawnbroker. He learned his trade from her uncle, with whom she lived, and was more like her big brother than anything else from the age of thirteen. After he had married her they prospered. He made a perfect pet of her—they used to say. His sisters put it that he made a perfect fool of himself over her. When their children were fifteen and nine he urged his employers to take a man into their firm—a great friend of his—and persuaded them; really went security for this man. When she saw the man she went all over cold. She said, Mark me, you've not done right: no good will come of this. But he laughed it off. Time passed: the man proved a villain. When they came to take stock, they found all the stock was false: he'd sold everything. This preyed on her husband's mind, went on preying, kept him up at night, made a changed man of him, he went mad as you might say over figures, worrying. One evening, sitting in his chair—well it was very late—he *died* of a clot of blood on the brain.

She was left. Her big boy was old enough to go out, but the little one was still not more than a baby: he was so nervous and delicate. The doctors had never let him go to school.

One day her brother-in-law came to see her and advised her to

sell up her home and get some work. All that keeps you back, he said, is little Bert. Now, I'd advise you to place a certain sum with your solicitors for him and put him out—in the country. He said he'd take him. I did as he advised. But, funny! I never heard a word from the child after he'd gone. I used to ask why he didn't write, and they said, when he can write a decent letter you shall have it—not before. That went on for a twelvemonth, and I found afterwards he'd been writing all the time, grieving to be took away, and they'd never sent his letters. Then, quite sudden his uncle wrote and said he must be taken away. He'd done the most awful things—things I couldn't find you a name for—he'd turned *vicious*—he was a little criminal! What his uncle said was I'd spoiled the child and he was going to make a man of him, and he'd beaten him and half starved him and when he was frightened at night and screamed, he turned him out into the New Forest and made him sleep under the branches. My big boy went down to see him. Mother, he says, you wouldn't know little Bert. He can't speak. He won't come near anybody. He starts off if you touch him; he's like a little beast. And, oh dear, the things he'd done! Well, you hear of children doing those things before they're put into orphanages. But when I heard that and thought it was the same little baby his father used to carry into Regent's Park bathed and dressed of a Sunday morning—well, I felt my religion was going from me.

I had a terrible time trying to get him into an orphanage. I begged for three months before they would take him. Then he was sent to Bisley. But after I'd been to see him there, in his funny clothes and all—I could see 'is misery. I was in a nice place at the time, cook to a butcher in a large way in Kensington, but that poor child's eyes—they used to follow me—and a sort of shivering that came over him when people went near.

Well, I had a friend kept a boarding house in Kensington. I used to visit her, and a friend of hers, a big well-set-up fellow, quite the gentleman, an engineeer who worked in a garage, came there very often. She used to joke and say he wanted to walk me out. I laughed it off till one day she was very serious. She said

You're a very silly woman. He earns good money; he'd give you a home and you could have your little boy. Well, he was to speak to me next day and I made up my mind to listen. Well, he did, and he couldn't have put it nicer. I can't give you a house to start with, he said, but you shall have three good rooms and the kid, and I'm earning good money and shall be more.

A week after, he come to me. I can't give you any money this week, he says, there's things to pay for from when I was single. But I daresay you've got a bit put by. And I was a fool, you know, I didn't think it funny. Oh yes, I said, I'll manage. Well, so it went on for three weeks. We'd arranged not to have little Bert for a month because, he said, he wanted me to himself, and he was so fond of him. A big fellow, he used to cling to me like a child and call me mother.

After three weeks was up I hadn't a penny. I'd been taking my jewellery and best clothes to put away to pay for him until he was straight. But one night I said, Where's my money? He just up and gave me such a smack in the face I thought my head would burst. And that began it. Every time I asked him for money he beat me. As I said, I was very religious at the time, used to wear a crucifix under my clothes and couldn't go to bed without kneeling by the side and saying my prayers—no, not even the first week of my marriage. Well, I went to a clergyman and told him everything and he said, 'My child, he said, I am very sorry for you, but with God's help, he said, it's your duty to make him a better man. You say your first husband was so good. Well, perhaps God has kept this trial for you until now.' I went home—and that very night he tore my crucifix off and hit me on the head when I knelt down. He said he wouldn't have me say my prayers; it made him wild. I had a little dog at the time I was very fond of, and he used to pick it up and shout, I'll teach it to say its prayers, and beat it before my eyes—until—well, such was the man he was.

Then one night he came in the worse of drink and wet the bed. I couldn't stand it. I began to cry. He gave me a hit on the ear and I fell down, striking my head on the fender. When I come to, he was gone. I ran out into the street just as I was—I ran as fast as I

could, not knowing where I was going—just dazed—my nerves were gone. And a lady found me and took me to her home and I was there three weeks. And after that I never went back. I never even told my people. I found work, and not till months after I went to see my sister. 'Good gracious!' she says, 'we all thought you was murdered!' And I never see him since. . . .

Those were dreadful times. I was so ill, I could scarcely hardly work and of course I couldn't get my little boy out. He had to grow up in it. And so I had to start all over again. I had nothing of his, nothing of mine. I lost it all except my marriage lines. Somehow I remembered them just as I was running out that night and put them in my boddy—sort of an instinct, as you might say.

June Often I reproach myself for my 'private' life—which, after all, were I to die, *would* astonish even those nearest to me. Then (as yesterday) I realise how little Jack shares with me. Last week I had no idea what was going in the paper, no copy of the paper, and J. had not the smallest curiosity as to whether I had seen or had not seen it.[1] He never even asked. It might have been a report from the Home Office. I found from Milne that he still goes to Somerset House. I found from him to-day that he is paid £250 a year for it.

Knowing my agony if anyone is *late*—having shared it with me a dozen times, saying he knows the difficulties of our domestic arrangements, he was 25 minutes late yesterday; and when he realised how he had hurt me, he sulked because he could not do as he liked—was always driven, *all* his pleasure spoilt, even at St. Alban's by worrying about my 'complex' about the time.

He went to St. Alban's yesterday and stayed until four, and never told me a thing of the journey—had nothing to tell.

To-day he is with his brother. We met for lunch and he discovered for me afterwards (when I asked) a number of new books which he has brought into the house and never shown me—just put away. He knows I can seldom go out—he knows I can *never* get to a bookshop; he knows how I *love* books—love dipping into

[1] The paper was *The Athenaeum*, which I was editing at this time.

them—love just a moment's chat about them, but all the same, he has never thought to share these finds with me—never for a moment.

All this hurts me horribly, but I like to face it and see all round it.

He ought not to have married. There never was a creature less fitted by nature for life with a *woman*.

And the strange truth is I don't WANT him to change; I want to see him, and then adjust my ways and go on alone and WORK.

Life without *work*—I would commit suicide. Therefore work is more important than life.

J. digs the garden as though he were exhuming a hated body or making a hole for a loved one.

The ardent creature spent more than half her time in church praying to be delivered from temptation. But God grew impatient at last and caused the door to be shut against her. 'For Heaven's sake,' said he, 'give the temptation a chance!'

It's raining, but the air is soft, smoky, warm. Big drops patter on the languid leaves, the tobacco flowers lean over. Now there is a rustle in the ivy. Wingley has appeared from the garden next door; he bounds from the wall. And delicately, lifting his paws, pointing his ears, very afraid that big wave will overtake him, he wades over the lake of green grass.[1]

'Mr. Despondency's daughter, Muchafraid, went through the water singing.'

She said: 'I don't feel in the least afraid. I feel like a little rock that the rising tide is going to cover. You won't be able to see me . . . big waves . . . but they'll go down again. I shall be there—winking bright.'

[1]Wingley, or Wing, was Katherine's little black and white cat. He was the son of Athenæum, and was originally called Wing Lee—a name taken from one of Katherine's extensive repertory of music-hall songs. 'Wing Lee bought a clock the other day, Just because it kept rag-time . . .'

Oh, what sentimental toshery!

June 10 I have discovered that I cannot burn the candle at one end and write a book with the other.

June 21 Bateson and his love of the louse for its own sake. Pedigree lice. £100 a year from the Royal Institute; a large family—desperately poor: but he never notices. The lives he saved in the Balkan war with shaving and Thymol. Cases reduced from 7000 to 700. No reward, not even an O.B.E. He dissects them, finds their *glands* and so on, keeps them in tiny boxes; they feed on his arm. The louse and the bed-bug.

Hydatids: the Australian who got them: handfuls of immature grapes. They attack the liver. In the human body they reproduce *in*definitely. When they are passed and a sheep is attacked by them, they develop *hooks* and become long worms.

The Egyptian disease: a parasite which attacks the veins and arteries and causes fluxion—constant bleeding. It is another egg drunk in water. After it has been in man the only thing it can affect is a water-snail. It goes through an entirely new cycle of *being* until it can attack man again.

Dysentery: another parasite.

Hydrophobia: the virus from the dog is taken and a rabbit is infected. That rabbit is used to infect another rabbit: the 2nd a 3rd, and so on, until you get a rabbit who is practically *pure* virus.

The spinal cords are then taken from these rabbits and dried by a vacuum. The result is pounded up fine into an emulsion: 1st rabbit, 2nd rabbit, 3rd rabbit, etc., and the patient is injected progressively till at last he receives a dose which, if he had not been prepared to resist it, would kill him outright. The disease develops very slowly; the treatment is very expensive. Symptoms are a profuse shiny bubbling saliva, and gasping and groaning as in gas-poisoning. No barking, no going on all fours.

In lockjaw the jaw does not lock.

Pasteur was a very dreamer of dreamers. Human beings are a *side-line* to science.

All this I talked over with Sorapure, June 21. His point of view about medicine seems to me *just completely right*. I'd willingly let him take off my head, look inside, and pop it on again, if he thought it might assist future generations. Quite the right man to have at one's dying bedside. He'd get me at any rate so interested in the process—gradual loss of sensitiveness, coldness in the joints, etc.—I'd lie there thinking: this is very valuable to know; I *must* make a note of this.

As he stood at the door talking: 'Nothing is incurable; it's all a question of *time*. What seems so useless to-day may just be that link which will make all plain to a future generation. . . .' I had a sense of the *larger breath*, of the mysterious lives within lives, and the Egyptian parasite beginning its new cycle of being in a water-snail affected me like a *great* work of art. No, that's not what I mean. It made me feel how *perfect* the world is, with its worms and hooks and ova, how incredibly perfect. There is the sky and the sea and the shape of a lily, and there is all this other as well. The *balance* how perfect! (*Salut*, Tchehov!) I would not have the one without the other.

The clocks are striking ten. Here in my room the sky looks lilac; in the bath-room it is like the skin of a peach. Girls are laughing. J. and Sullivan are down in Somerset—happy, I feel—if they are warm enough—enjoying each other.

I have consumption. There is still a great deal of moisture (*and* pain) in my BAD lung. But I do not care. I do not want anything I could not have. Peace, solitude, time to write my books, beautiful external life to watch and ponder—no more. O, I'd like a child as well—a baby boy; *mais je demande trop!*

Part of this note appears again in the following form.

As he stood at the door he said quietly, 'Nothing is incurable. What seems so useless to-day may be the link that will make all plain to-morrow.' We have been discussing hydatids, the Egyptian parasite that begins its cycle of existence being in a water-snail, and the effects of hydrophobia. He smiled gently. There was nothing to be alarmed or shocked or surprised at. It was all a

question of knowing these things as they should be known and not otherwise. But he said none of this and went off to his next case. . .

At breakfast time a mosquito and a wasp came to the edge of the honey dish to drink. The mosquito was a lovely little high stepping gazelle, but the wasp was a fierce roaring tiger. Drink, my darlings!

When the coffee is cold L.M. says: These things have to happen sometimes. And she looks mysterious and important, as if, as a matter of fact, she had known all along that this was a cold coffee day.

What I felt was, he said, that I wasn't in the whole of myself at all. I'd got locked in, somehow, in some little . . . top room in my mind, and strangers had got in—people I'd never seen before were making free of the rest of it. There was a dreadful feeling of confusion, chiefly that, and . . . vague noises—like things being moved—changed about—in my head. I lit the candle and sat up and in the mirror I saw a dark, brooding, strangely lengthened face.

'The feeling roused by the cause is more important than the cause itself. . . .' That is the kind of thing I like to say to myself as I get into the train. And then, as one settles into the corner—'For example'—or 'Take—for instance . . .' It's a good game for *one*.

Second Violin

She fastens on a white veil and hardly knows herself. Is it becoming or is it not becoming? Ah, who is there to say? There is a lace butterfly on her left cheek and a spray of flowers on her right. Two dark bold eyes stare through the mesh—Surely not hers. Her lips tremble; faint, she sinks on her bed. And now she doesn't want to go. Must she? She is being driven out of the flat by those bold eyes. Out you go. Ah, how cruel! (*Second Violin.*)

But her hand is large and cold with big knuckles and short

square nails. It is not a little velvet hand that sighs, that yields—faints dead away and has to be revived again only to faint once more. (*S.V.*)

What do I want? she thought. What do I really want more than anything else in the world? If I had a wishing ring or Ali Baba's lamp—no, it wasn't Ali Baba—it was—Oh, what did it matter! Just supposing some one came. . . . 'I am here to grant your dearest wish.' And she saw, vaguely, a fluffy little creature with a silver paper star on a wand—a school fairy. . . . What should I say? It was cold in the kitchen, cold and dim. The tap dripped slowly, as tho' the water were half frozen. . . . (*S.V.*)

Miss Todd and Miss Hopper were second violins. Miss Bray was a viola.

Midday strikes on various bells—some velvety soft, some languid, some regretful, and one impatient—a youthful bell ringing high and quick above the rest. He thought joyfully: That's the bell for me! . . .

Cinderella.

Oh, my sisters—my beautiful Peacock-proud sisters—have pity on me as I sit with my little broom beside the cold ashes while you dance at the Prince's party. But why—is the Fairy Godmother, the coach, the plumes and glass slippers just—faery—and all the rest of the story deeply, deeply true? Fate I suppose—Fate. It had to be. These things happen so. La réponse: Poor old girl—of course she is awfully sorry for her, but she does become a bore—doesn't she? There's no getting away from it.

When they got into bed together her feet rushed to greet his like little puppies that had been separated all day from their brothers. And first they chased one another and played and nudged gently. But then, they settled down, curled up, twined together under the édredon (like puppies on a warm hearth rug) and went to sleep.

Dark Bogey is a little inclined to jump into the milk jug to rescue the fly.

Fairylike, the fire rose in two branched flames like the golden antlers of some enchanted stag.

The Letters of Anton Tchehov.

'Here, *as usual*, he met with severe weather.'

'Purely external causes are sufficient to make one unjust to oneself, suspicious and morbidly sensitive.'

'Better say to man "My angel" than hurl "Fool" at his head—though men are more like fools than they are like angels.'

'I have always felt strange when people whose death was at hand talked, smiled, or wept in my presence; but here, when I see on the verandah this blind woman who laughs, jokes, or hears my stories read to her, what begins to seem strange to me is not that she is dying, but that we do not feel our own death, and write stories as though we were never going to die.'

'My business is merely to be talented—i.e. to know how to distinguish important statements on the characters, and to speak their language.'

'It is better to put your colour on too faint than too strong.'

'An incomprehensible impulse of defiance mastered me—that impulse which made me bathe from the yacht in the middle of the Black Sea and has impelled me to not a few acts of folly.'

'There is no greater enjoyment in life than sleep when one is sleepy.'

'When one is travelling one absolutely must be alone. To sit in a chaise or in a room alone with one's thoughts is much more interesting than being with people.'

'So you like my story? Well, thank God! of late I have become devilishly suspicious and uneasy. I am constantly fancying that my trousers are horrid, and that I am writing not as I want to, and that I am giving my patients the wrong powders. It must be a special neurosis.'

'Tolstoy denies mankind immortality, but my God! how much that is personal there is in it! The day before yesterday I read his "Afterword". Strike me dead! but it is stupider and stuffier than "Letters to a Governor's Wife", which I despise.'

'Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japhet. Ham only noticed that his father was a drunkard, and completely lost sight of the fact that he was a genius, that he had built an ark and saved the world.

Writers must not imitate Ham, bear that in mind.'

'A public confession "I am a sinner, a sinner, a sinner" is such pride that it made me feel uncomfortable.'

'Tolstoy! In these days he is not a man but a super-man, a Jupiter.'

'From here, far away, people seem very good, and that is natural, for in going away into the country we are not hiding from people but from our vanity, which in town among people is unjust and active beyond measure. Looking at the spring, I have a dreadful longing that there should be paradise in the other world. In fact, at moments I am so happy that I superstitiously pull myself up and remind myself of my creditors, who will one day drive me out of the Australia I have so happily won.'

'When you depict sad or unlucky people, and want to touch people's hearts, try to be colder—it gives their grief, as it were, a background, against which it stands out in sharper relief.'

'I haven't a halfpenny, but the way I look at it is this: the rich man is not he who has plenty of money, but he who has the means to live now in the luxurious surroundings given us by early spring.'

'You may weep and moan over your stories, you may suffer together with your heroes, but I consider one must do this so that the reader does not notice it. The more objective, the stronger will be the effect.'

'When one thinks of Tolstoy's Anna Karenina all these young ladies of Turgenev's, with their seductive shoulders, fade away into nothing.'

'The descriptions of nature are fine, but I feel that we have already got out of the way of such descriptions and that we need something different.'

'Something in me protests: reason and justice tell me that in the electricity and heat of love for man there is something greater than chastity and abstinence from meat.'

'I, too, want "something sour", and that's not a mere chance feeling, for I notice the same mood in others round me. It is just as if they had all been in love, had fallen out of love, and now were looking for some new distraction.'

'The thought that I must, that I ought to, write never leaves me for an instant.'

'I think that nearness to Nature and idleness are essential elements of happiness; without them it is impossible.' . . .

'I should like to meet a philosopher like Nietzsche somewhere in a train or steamer, and to spend the whole night talking to him.'

So should I, old boy!

'The object of the novel [one of Sinkiewicz's] is to lull the bourgeoisie to sleep in its golden dreams. Be faithful to your wife, pray with her over the prayer-book, save money, love sport, and all is well with you in this world and the next. The bourgeoisie is very fond of so-called practical types and novels with happy endings, since they soothe it with the idea that one can both create capital and preserve innocence, be a beast and at the same time be happy.'

'A man can deceive his fiancée or his mistress as much as he likes, and, in the eyes of a woman he loves, an ass may pass for a philosopher; but a daughter is a different matter.'

'They tell me to eat six times and are indignant with me for eating, as they think, very little.'

'You complain that my heroes are gloomy—alas! that's not my fault. This happens apart from my will, and when I write it does not seem to me that I am writing gloomily.'

'I am going to build so as to have a place in which to spend the winters. The prospect of continual wandering with hotel rooms, hotel porters, chance cooking, and so on, alarms my imagination.'

'The most important screw in family life is love, sexual attraction, one flesh; all the rest is dreary and cannot be reckoned upon, however cleverly we make our calculations.

To marry is interesting only for love; to marry a girl simply because she is nice is like buying something one does not want at a bazaar solely because it is of good quality.'

Compare: 'I made some cheap purchases: if anything *not wanted* can be cheap.' (Crabb Robinson: *June* 26, 1820.)

'You must once and for all give up being worried about successes and failures. Don't let that concern you. It's your duty to go on working steadily day by day, quite quietly, to be prepared for mistakes, which are inevitable, for failures—and let other people count the calls before the curtain.'

'The immense majority of people are nervous: the greater number suffer, and a small proportion feel acute pain; but where—in streets and in houses—do you see people tearing about, leaping up, and clutching at their heads? Suffering ought to be expressed as it is expressed in life—that is, not by the arms and legs, but by the tone and expression; not by gesticulation, but by grace.'

Two Climates.

I'd always rather be in a place that is too hot than one that's too cold. But I'd always rather be with people who loved me too little than with people who loved me too much.

'She has made her bed,' said Belle—'she must lie on it.' I reflected thankfully that in this case that would be no hardship—on the contrary. Indeed, I hoped it was what they were both longing to do. . . .

North Africa. The whole valley is smothered in little white lilies. You never saw such a sight! They make me feel so wretchedly homesick. They smell just like dear old Selfridge's.

Souvent j'ai dit à mon mari: Nous en prenons un? Et il me dit: Ah, non, non, ma pauvre femme. Notre petit moment pour jouer est passé. Je ne peux rien faire que de rester dans un chaise en faisant des grimaces, et ça fait trembler plus que ça ne fait rire un petit enfant.

When I read Dr. Johnson, I feel like a little girl sitting at the

same table. My eyes grow round. I don't only listen; I take him in *immensely*.

So he sat there, burning the letters, and each time he cast a fresh packet on the flame, his shadow, immense, huge, leapt out of the wall opposite him. It looked, sitting so stiff and straight, like some horrible old god, toasting his knees at the flames of the sacrifice.

'Don't you think it would be marvellous,' she said, 'to have just one person in one's life to whom one could tell everything?' She leant forward, put down her cup, but stayed bent forward touching the spoon against the saucer. She looked up—'Or is it just childish of me—just absurd to want such a thing? . . . All the same,' she leaned back, smiling, 'childish or not—how wonderful it would be—how wonderful! to feel—from this person, this one person—I really don't need to hide anything. It would be such heavenly happiness!' she cried, suddenly, 'it would make life so . . .' she got up, went to the window, looked out vaguely and turned round again. She laughed. 'It's a queer thing,' she said, 'I've always believed in the possibility—and yet—in reality . . . Take R. and me, for instance.' And here she flung back in a chair and leant back, still she was laughing but her body leant to the chair as though exhausted. 'I tell him everything. You know we're . . . rather different from most people. What I mean is—don't laugh—we love each other simply tremendously—we're everything to each other! In fact he's the one person on earth for me—and yet,' and she shut her eyes and bit her lip as though she wanted to stop laughing herself: 'try, try, try as I can—there's always just one secret—just one—that never can be told—that mocks me.' And then for a moment she lay still. . . .

Indoo Weather: A Dream.

'It's what you might call indoo weather,' said the little man.

'Oh, really. . . . Why that?' said I, vague.

He did not answer. The two polished knobs of his behind shone

as he leaned over feeding the black seams of the boat with a brown twist.

The day was dull, steaming; there was a blackness out at sea; the heavy waves came tolling. On the sea grasses the large bright dew fell not. The little man's hammer went tap-tap.

L.M. snorted, threw up her head, stamped her feet on the wet sand, scrambled to a boulder, tore at some sea-poppies, dug them in her hat, held the hat away, looked, scornful, wrenched them out again.

I looked and felt vague as a king.

'Spades and buckets is round the point with the lobster catch.' The hammer tapped. He explained that all the lovers would be sent away alive in sacks if they were not given a sharp *stang* with one of these. It was an ordinary grey and red garden trowel. L.M. went off to save their lives, but not joyfully. She walked heavy, her head down, beating the trowel against her side.

We were alone. The watcher appeared. He stood always in profile, his felt hat turned up at the side, a patch on the eye nearest us. His curved pipe fell from his jaws.

'Hi, Missy,' he shouted to me. 'Why don't you give us a bit of a show out there?'

The little man remonstrated. The sea was like a mass of half-set jelly. On the horizon it seemed ages fell.

'Come on, Missy!' bawled the watcher. I took off my clothes, stepped to the edge and was drawn in. I tried to catch the stumps of an old wharf, but slime filled my nails and I was sucked out. They watched.

Suddenly there came, winnowing landward, an enormous skinny skeleton of a Hindoo, standing upright. A tattered pink and white print coat flapped about his stiff outstretched arms. He had cloth of the same with a fringe of spangles over his head. He stood upright because of the immense sweeping broom of wood growing waist-high. 'Help! Help!' I called.

The noise of the hammer came, and I felt the watcher's patched profile. A huge unbreakable wave lifted him, tipped him near. His shadow lay even, on the surface of the dusty water—a squat head and two giant arms. It broadened into a smile.

Strangers.

I saw Santayana as a little fair man with a walrus moustache, a bowler much too small for him and an ancient frock coat that he keeps buttoning and unbuttoning. D.B.[1] saw him as a grave gentleman with big black whiskers. Anyhow, there he was at the end of a dark tunnel, either coming towards us or walking away. . . . That started us on a fascinating subject. There are the people in D.B.'s life I've never seen (very few) and the immense number in mine that he has only heard of. What did they look like to us? And then, before we meet anyone while they are still far too far off to be seen we begin to build an image. . . . how true is it? It's queer how well one gets to know this stranger; how often you've watched him before the other comes to take his place. . . . I can even imagine someone keeping their 'first impression'—*in spite of* the other.

Men and Women.

'I get on best with women,'
 She laughed and crumbled her cake.
'Men are such unknown country.
 I never know how to take
What they say, nor how they mean it
 And—oh, well they *are* so queer,
So—don't you know!—*so*—this and that.
 You know what I mean, my dear!

'With women it's so much simpler,'
 She laughed and cuddled her muff.
'One doesn't have to keep smiling—
 Now what have I said?—It's enough
To chat over nothing important.
 That *is* such a rest, I find,
In these strenuous days, don't you know, dear?
 They put *such* a strain on the mind.'

[1] Dark Bogey, i.e. J.M.M.

Friendship.

When we were charming *Backfisch*
With curls and velvet bows
We shared a charming kitten
With tiny velvet toes.

It was so gay and playful;
It flew like a woolly ball
From my lap to your shoulder—
And, oh, it was so small,

So warm—and so obedient
If we cried: 'That's enough!'
It lay and slept between us,
A purring ball of fluff.

But now that I am thirty
And she is thirty-one,
I shudder to discover
How wild our cat has run.

It's bigger than a Tiger,
It's eyes are jets of flame,
Its claws are gleaming daggers,
Could it have once been tame?

Take it away; I'm frightened!
But she, with placid brow,
Cries: 'This is our Kitty-witty!
Why don't you love her now?'

July.

TEDIOUS BRIEF ADVENTURE OF K.M.

A Doctor who came from Jamaica
Said: 'This time I'll mend her or break her.
I'll plug her with serum;
And if she can't bear 'em
I'll call in the next undertaker.'

His *locum tenens*, Doctor Byam,
Said: 'Right oh, old fellow, we'll try 'em,
For I'm an adept, O,
At pumping in strepto
Since I was a surgeon in Siam.'

The patient, who hailed from New Zealing,
Said: 'Pray don't consider my feeling,
Provided you're certain
"I will not go on hurtin'",
I'll lie here and smile at the ceiling.'

These two very bloodthirsty men
Injected five million, then ten,
But found that the strepto
Had suddenly crept to
Her feet—and the worst happened then!

Any day you may happen to meet
Her alone in the Hampstead High Street
In a box on four wheels
With a whistle that squeals;
And her hands do the job of her feet.

July 20 Beware!

August 1 Beware!!

It is pleasant to plant cuttings of futurity if only one in ten takes root.

In September 1919 Katherine went to San Remo, and, after a few weeks, took a little furnished cottage—the Casetta—at Ospedaletti near by. I was with her in San Remo, but returned to England to my work on The Athenæum as soon as she was settled into the Casetta with L.M. For a time Katherine was happy; but then illness and isolation and the everlasting sound of the sea began to depress her.

A Recipe: Wingley Pudding.

Fill a glass dish with cream. Put it on the floor and go out, shutting the door, with me left in the room.

Wing.

Mrs. Nightingale: A Dream.

November Walking up a dark hill with high iron fences at the sides of the road and immense trees over. I was looking for a midwife, Mrs. Nightingale. A little girl, barefoot, with a handkerchief over her head pattered up and put her chill hand in mine; she would lead me.

A light showed from a general shop. Inside a beautiful fair angry young woman directed me up the hill and to the right.

'You should have believed *me*!' said the child, and dug her nails into my palm.

There reared up a huge wall with a blank notice plastered on it. That was the house. In a low room, sitting by a table, a dirty yellow and black rug on her knees, an old hag sat. She had a grey handkerchief on her head. Beside her on the table was a jar of onions and a fork. I explained. She was to come to mother. Mother was very delicate: her eldest daughter was thirty-one and she had heart disease. 'So please come at once.'

'Has she any adhesions?' muttered the old hag, and she speared an onion, ate it and rubbed her nose.

'Oh, yes'—I put my hands on my breast—'many, many plural adhesions.'

'Ah, that's bad, that's very bad,' said the old crone, hunching up the rug so that through the fringe I saw her square slippers. 'But I can't come. I've a case at four o'clock.'

At that moment a healthy, bonny young woman came in with a bundle. She sat down by the midwife and explained, 'Jinnie has had hers already.' She unwound the bundle too quickly: a newborn baby with round eyes fell forward on her lap. I felt the pleasure of the little girl beside me—a kind of quiver. The young woman blushed and lowered her voice. 'I got her to . . .' And she paused to find a very *medical private* word to describe washing. . . .

'To *navigate* with a bottle of English water,' she said, 'but it isn't all away yet.'

Mrs. Nightingale told me to go to the friend, Madame Léger, who lived on the terrace with a pink light before her house. I went. The terrace of houses was white and grey-blue in the moonlight, with dark pines down the road. I saw the exquisite pink light. But just then there was a clanking sound behind me, and there was the little girl, bursting with breathlessness, dragging in her arms a huge black bag. 'Mrs. Nightingale says you forgot this.'

So I was the midwife. I walked on, thinking: 'I'll go and have a look at the poor little soul. But it won't be for a long time yet.'

The following verses, with another set, printed in Letters to J.M.M., *p.* 427, *were enclosed in a letter sent me on December* 4, 1919.

He wrote:

Darling Heart, if you would make me
Happy, you have found the way.
Write me letters. How they shake me,
Thrill me all the common day

With our love. I hear your laughter—
Little laughs! I see your look.
'They Lived Happy Ever After'
As you close the faery book.

Work's been nothing but a pleasure
Every silly little word
Dancing to some elfin measure
Piped by a small chuckling bird.

All this love—as though I've tasted
Wine too rare for human food—
I have dreamed away and wasted
Just because the news was good.

Where's the pain of counting money
When my little queen is there
In the parlour eating honey,
Beautiful beyond compare.

How I love you! You are better.
Does it matter, being apart?
Oh the love that's in this letter—
Feel it, beating like a heart.

Beating out: 'I do adore you,
Now and to Eternity.
See me as I stand before you,
Happy as you'd have me be.

Don't be sad, and don't be lonely.
Drive away those awful fears.
When they come, remember only
How I've suffered these two years.

Darling heart, if you must sorrow.
Think:'My pain must be his pain.'
Think: 'He will be sad to-morrow.'
And then—make me smile again.

Et Après

When the last breath was taken
And the old miser death had shaken
The last glim from her eyes,
He retired,
And to the world's surprise
Wrote these inspired, passion-fired
Poems of Sacrifice.
The world said:
If she had not been dead
(And burièd)
He'd never have written these.
She was hard to please.

They're better apart.
Now, the stone
Has rolled away from his heart.
Now, he's come into his own,
Alone.

Death.

December 15, 1919 When I had gone to bed I realised what it was that had caused me to 'give way'. It was the effort of being up, with a heart that wouldn't work. Not my lungs at all. My despair simply disappeared—yes, *simply*. The weather was lovely. Every morning the sun came in and drew those squares of golden light on the wall, I looked round my bed on to a sky like silk. The day opened slowly, slowly like a flower, and it held the sun long, long before it slowly, slowly folded. Then my homesickness went. I not only didn't want to be in England, I began to love Italy, and the thought of it—the sun—even when it was too hot—always the sun—and a kind of *wholeness* which was good to bask in.

After a few days J.'s letters in response to *my* depressed letters began to arrive. There were a series of them. As I grew depressed, *he* grew depressed, but not for me. He began to write (1) about the suffering I caused him: *his* suffering, *his* nerves, *he* wasn't made of whipcord or steel, the fruit was bitter for *him*. (2) a constant cry about money. He had none; he saw no chance of getting any —'heavy debts'—'as you know I am a bankrupt'. 'I know it sounds callous.' 'I can't face it.' These letters, especially the letters about money, cut like a knife through something that had grown up between us. They changed the situation for me, at least, for ever. We had been for two years drifting into a relationship, different to anything I had ever known. We'd been *children* to each other, openly confessed children, telling each other everything, each depending equally upon the other. Before that I had been the man and he had been the woman and he had been called upon to make no real efforts. He'd never really 'supported' me. When we first met, in fact, it was I who kept him, and afterwards we'd always acted (more or less) like men-friends. Then this illness—getting worse and worse, and turning me into a woman and asking

him to put himself away and to *bear* things for me. He stood it marvellously. It helped very much because it was a romantic disease (his love of a 'romantic appearance' is *immensely* real) and also being 'children' together gave us a practically unlimited chance to play at life, not to live. It was child love. Yes, I think the most marvellous, the most radiant love that this world knows: terribly rare. We've had it. But we were not *pure*. If we had been, he'd have faced coming away with me. And that he could not do, He'd not have said he was too tired to earn enough to keep us here. He always refused to face what it meant—living alone together for two years on not much money. He said and three-quarters of him believed: I couldn't stand the strain of it with you ill. But it was a lie and a confession that all was not well between us. And I always knew it. Nevertheless, I played up, and truly even in October I clung to him still—still the child—seeing as our salvation a house in the country, in England, *not later than next May* and then never to be apart again. The letters—ended all of it. *Was* it the letters? I must not forget something else.

All these two years I have been obsessed by the fear of death. This grew and grew and grew *gigantic*, and this it was that made me cling so, I think. Ten days ago it went, I care no more. It leaves me perfectly cold. Well it was that *and* the letters perhaps. Gone is my childish love—gone is my desire to live in England. I don't particularly want to live with him. I'd like to if it could be managed—but *no sacrifices, please*. As to leaning—as to being a 'little lovely darling'—it's not conceivable. I want to *work*—here—get a good maid in place of L.M. and that's all. Quite all? Yes, all. I am become—Mother. I don't care a *rap* for people. I shall always love Jack and be his wife but I couldn't get back to that anguish—joy—sweet madness of love of the other years. Such love has gone for me. And life either stays or goes.

I must put down here a dream. The first night I was in bed here, i.e. after my first day in bed, I went to sleep. And suddenly I felt my whole body *breaking up*. It broke up with a violent shock—an earthquake—and it broke like glass. A long terrible shiver, you understand—and the spinal cord and the bones and every bit

and particle quaking. It sounded in my ears—a low, confused din, and there was a sense of flashing greenish brilliance, like broken glass. When I woke up I thought there had been a violent earthquake. But all was still. It slowly dawned upon me—the conviction that in that dream I died.[1] I shall go on living now—it may be for months, or for weeks or days or hours. Time is not. In that dream I died. The *spirit* that is the enemy of death and quakes so and is so tenacious was shaken out of me. I am (December 15, 1919) a dead woman, and *I don't care*. It might comfort others to know that one gives up caring; but they'd not believe any more than I did until it happened. And, oh, how strong was its hold upon me! How I *adored* life and *dreaded* death!

I'd like to write my books and spend some happy time with Jack (not very much faith withal) and see Lawrence in a sunny place and pick violets—all kinds of flowers. Oh, I'd like to do heaps of things, really. But I don't mind if I do not do them.

That queer simplicity—that deep simple love *is* not. It only existed until we put it to the test. Then when I cried out, Jack [*illegible*] me—because it hurt him to hear me—I stopped his play I made the house all wrong. . . . How clear it all is! Immediately I, as a tragic figure, outfaced or threatened to outface him (yes, that's exactly the truth) the truth was revealed. He was the one who really wanted *all* the tragedy. It must have been a fearful blow to share at all . . . I am glad it's over. I wouldn't call it back.

Honesty (why?) is the only thing one seems to prize beyond life, love, death, everything. It alone remaineth. O those that come after me, will you believe it? At the end *truth* is the only thing *worth having*: it's more thrilling than love, more joyful and more passionate. It simply can*not* fail. All else fails. I, at any rate, give the remainder of my life to it and it alone.

I'd like to write a *long, long* story on this and call it 'Last Words to Life.' One *ought* to write it. And another on the subject of HATE.

[1]Written later in the margin against this paragraph, ending 'In that dream I died,' is 'important! For the confessions'.

December It often happens to me now that when I lie down to sleep at night, instead of getting drowsy, I get wakeful and, lying here in bed, I begin to *live* over either scenes from real life or imaginary scenes. It's not too much to say they are almost hallucinations: they are marvellously vivid. I lie on my right side and put my left hand up to my forehead as though I were praying. This seems to *induce* the state. Then, for instance, it is 10.30 p.m. on a big liner in mid-ocean. . . . People are beginning to leave the Ladies' Cabin. Father puts his head in and asks if 'one of you women care for a walk before you turn in. It's glorious up on deck.' That begins it. I am *there*. Details: Father rubbing his gloves, the cold air—the *night* air rather—he brings to the door, the pattern of everything, the feel of the brass stair-rail and the rubber stairs. Then the deck—the pause while the cigar is lighted, the look of all in the moonlight, the *steadying* hum of the ship, the first officer on the deck, so far aloft the bells, the steward going into the smoking-room with a tray, stepping over the high, brass-bound step. . . . All these things are far realer, more in detail, *richer* than life. And I believe I could go on until . . . There's *no end* to it.

I can do this about everything. Only there are no personalities. Neither am I there personally. People are only part of the silence, *not* of the pattern—vastly different from that—part of the *scheme*. I could always do this to a certain extent; but it's only since I was really ill that this—shall we call it?—'consolation prize' has been given to me. My God! it's a marvellous thing.

I can call up certain persons—Doctor S. for instance. And then I remember how I used to say to J. and R. 'He was looking very beautiful to-day.' I did not know what I was saying. But when I so summon him and see him 'in relation', he *is* marvellously beautiful. There again he comes complete, to every detail, to the shape of his thumbs, to looking over his glasses, his lips as he writes, and particularly in all connected with putting the needle into the syringe. . . . I *relive* all this at will.

My life with Jack I'm not inclined to relive. It doesn't enter my head. Where that life was there's just a blank. The future—the

present—life with him is not. It has got to be lived. There is nothing in it. Something has stopped—a wall has been raised and it's too recent for me to wish to go there even. Wait till it looks a little less new . . . is the feeling. I'm not in the least curious either, and not in the least inclined to lament.

If one wasn't so afraid—why should I be? this isn't going to be read by Bloomsbury *et Cie*—I'd say we had a child—a love-child, and it's dead. We may have other children, but this child can't be made to live again. J. says: Forget that letter! How can I? It killed the child—*killed* it *really* and *truly* for ever as far as I am concerned. Oh, I don't doubt that, if I live, there will be other children, but there won't be that child.

'Any children?' he asked, taking out his stethoscope, as I struggled with my nightgown.

'No—no children.'

But what would he have said if I had told him that until a few days ago I had had a little child, aged five and three-quarters—of undetermined sex. Some days it was a boy. For two years now it had very often been a little girl.

Hotspur. Henry IV, Act II, Scene III. 'But I tell you, my lord fool, out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower, safely.'

In the Bath.

She liked to lie in the bath and very gently swish the water over her white jellified old body. As she lay there, her arms at her sides, her legs straight out, she thought: 'This is how I shall look, this is how they will arrange me in my coffin.' And it seemed to her, as she gazed at herself, terribly true that people were made to fit coffins—made in the shape of coffins. Just then she saw her wet shining toes as they were pressed against the end of the bath. They looked so gay, so unconscious of their fate. They seemed really to be smiling all in a row—the little toes so small. 'Oh!' She gave the sponge a tragic squeeze.

Secret Flowers.

Is love a light for me? A steady light,
A lamp within whose pallid pool I dream
Over old love-books? Or is it a gleam,
A lantern coming towards me from afar
Down a dark mountain? Is my love a star?
Ah me! so high above—so coldly bright!

The fire dances. Is my love a fire
Leaping down the twilight ruddy and bold?
Nay, I'd be frightened of him. I'm too cold
For quick and eager loving. There's a gold
Sheen on these flower petals as they fold
More truly mine, more like to my desire.

The flower petals fold. They are by the sun
Forgotten. In a shadowy wood they grow
Where the dark trees keep up a to-and-fro
Shadowy waving. Who will watch them shine
When I have dreamed my dream? Ah, darling mine,
Find them, gather them for me one by one.

December Surely I do know more than other people: I have suffered more, and endured more. I know how they long to be happy, and how precious is an atmosphere that is loving, a *climate* that is not frightening. Why do I not try to bear this in mind, and try to cultivate my garden? Now I descend to a strange place among strangers. Can I not make myself felt as a real personal force? (why should you?) Ah, but I *should*. I have had experiences unknown to them. I should by now have learnt C.'s obiter dictum—how true it might be. It *must* be.

The italic in the following is Katherine's: it means that she had under-gone Tchehov's experience, at the Casetta.

'My cough is considerably better, I am sunburnt, they tell me I am fatter, but the other day I almost fell down and I fancied for a

minute that I was dying. I was walking along the avenue with the prince, our neighbour, and was talking, when all at once something seemed to *break* in my chest, I had a feeling of *warmth* and *suffocation*, there was a singing in my ears, I remembered that I had been having palpitations for a long time and thought—"They must have meant something, then." I went rapidly towards the verandah, on which visitors were sitting, and had one thought—that it would be awkward to fall down and die before strangers; but I went into my bedroom, drank some water and recovered.

(Tchehov's letters: *April* 21, 1894.)

'I am in the condition of a transplanted tree which is hesitating whether to take root or begin to wither.' (Tchehov's letters: *February* 10, 1900). So am I exactly.

'I can't eat the butter here. Evidently, my digestion is hopelessly ruined. It is scarcely possible to cure it by anything but fasting—that is, eating nothing—and that's the end of it. And the only remedy for the asthma is not moving.' (Tchehov's letters: *June* 28, 1904.) Who reads between the lines here? I at least. K.M.

Lame Ducks.

It is seldom that lame ducks are seen together. As a rule, so profoundly unaware do they appear to be of one another's existence one is almost tempted to believe that a lame duck to a lame duck really is invisible. They may frequent the same cafés for years, attend the same studio parties, feed at the same restaurants, even sit with the same group round a table, but when the others get up to go, the lame duck's way is with these—to the right—and the other—with those, to the left.

I wish he would cross his legs and rest his hands on his knee. But no, he sprawls, his shoulders hunched, his hands stuffed in his pockets, staring at his feet. They do look very curious, pressed so flat against the curved floor of the cab; the toes turned in and the shoes appear for some reason to be made not of leather,—of gunmetal.

'I dream that the dearest I ever knew
Has died and been entombed.
I am sure it's a dream that cannot be true. . . .

Yet stays this nightmare too appalling,
And like a web shakes me,
And piteously I keeep on calling,
And no-one wakes me.'
(Thomas Hardy.)

'Whenever there is someone in a family who has been long ill, and hopelessly ill, there come painful moments when all, timidly, secretly, at the bottom of their hearts long for his death.' (Tchehov, *Peasants*). And even write poems . . .

In the third week in December I went to the Casetta, and stayed a fortnight. I returned to my work in London early in January.

December 29 Catherine brought maid. Jack returned exhausted from San Remo. Bathed his head. In the afternoon played demon. Jack was furious at my lack of sympathy. He was dying, Egypt, dying. But he could laugh heartily at the Smallwood family. 'That's first chop!'

December 30 Calm day. In garden. Read early poems in Oxford Book. Discussed our future library. In the evening read Dostoevsky. In the morning discussed the importance of 'eternal life'. Played our famous Stone Game (Cape Sixpence and Cornwall).[1] But something is wrong.

December 31 Long talk over house. Foster said I could walk. Sea sounded like an island sea. Happy. Lovely fire in my bedroom. Succès éclatant avec demon before dinner. Listened to Wingley's fiddle. The wooden bed.

[1]The Stone Game was simple. You placed a largish stone at the extreme edge of a cliff, sat down about ten yards away and shied smaller stones at it. The one who first toppled it over received sixpence from the other. Hence the name, Cape Sixpence, which we gave to the cliff near Bandol where we first played the game.

1920

January 1 Jack prepares to go. Drying figs on the stove, and white socks drying from the mantelpiece. A dish of oranges and rain-wet leaves—a pack of cards on the table. It rains but it is warm. The jonquil is in bud. We linger at the door. L.M. sings.

January 2 Jack left for London. The house very empty and quiet. I was ill all day—exhausted. In the afternoon fell asleep over my work and missed the post. My heart won't lie down. No post. During the night the cat picture became terrifying.

January 3 A load of wood. Sent review. Cold day. Miss K.S. called—deadly dull. Her yawn and recovery. Storm of wind and rain. I had nightmare about Jack. He and I 'separated'. Miss K.S. talked about tulips, but she makes all sound so *fussy*: the threads of her soul all ravelled.

January 4 Cold, wet, windy, terrible weather. Fought it all day. Horribly depressed. Dickinson came to tea; but it was no good. Worked. Two wires from J. According to promise. I cannot write. The jonquils are out, weak and pale. Black clouds pull over.

Immediately the sun goes in I am overcome—again the black fit takes me. I *hate* the *sea*. There is naught to do but WORK. But how can I work when this awful weakness makes even the pen like a walking-stick?

January 5 *Henry IV*. Nuit blanche. Decided at 3 a.m. that D. was a homicidal maniac. *Certain* of this. Started my story, *Late Spring*. A cold bitter day. Worked on Tchehov all day and then at my story till 11 p.m. Anna came. We talked about her to her face in English. No letters. Post Office strike. Anna's bow and velvet blouse.

January 6 *Winter's Tale*. *Black day*. Dark, no sky to be seen; a livid sea; a noise of boiling in the air. Dreamed the cats died of

anti-pneumonia. Heart attack 8 a.m. Awful day. No relief for a moment. Couldn't work. At night changed the position of my bed, but it was no good: I did not sleep. At five o'clock I thought I was at sea tossing—for ever. N.B.

January 7 On the verandah. I don't want a God to praise or to entreat, but to *share* my vision with. This afternoon looking at the primula after the rain. I want no one to 'dance and wave their arms'. I only want to *feel* they see, too. But Jack won't. Sitting out there in the sun—where is my *mate*? *He* wants neither external life *nor* depression?!!!

January 8 BLACK. A day spent in Hell. Unable to do anything. Took brandy. Determined not to weep—wept. Sense of isolation frightful. I shall die if I don't escape. Nauseated, faint, cold with misery. Oh, I *must* survive it somehow. Wrote to Jinnie.

January 9 BLACK. Another of them. In the afternoon Foster came and agreed that I must leave here. I somehow or other wrote a column. Broke my watch glass. In the evening L.M. and I were more nearly friendly than we have been for years. I couldn't rest or sleep. The roaring of the sea was insufferable. Posted to Jinnie.

January 10 Father's marriage: news from Marie. Spent the evening writing another column. Help me, God! And then L.M. came in to say I was half-an-hour slow. Just did it in time. Had talk with L.M. Our friendship is returning—in the old fashion. Thought out *The Exile*.[1] Appalling night of misery, deciding that J. had no more need of our love.

January 11 Worked from 9.30 a.m. till a quarter after midnight only stopping to eat. Finished the story. Lay awake then until 5.30 too excited to sleep. In the sea drowned souls sang all night. I thought of everything in my life, and it all came back so vividly—all is connected with this feeling that J. and I are no longer as we were. I love him but he rejects my *living* love. This is anguish. These are the worst days of my whole life.

[1] Afterwards called *The Man without a Temperament*.

January 12 Posted the story and a telegram. Very tired. The sea howled and boomed and roared away. When will this cup pass from me? Oh, misery! I cannot sleep. I lie *retracing* my steps—going over all the old life before. . . . The baby of Garnet Trowell.

January 13 Bad day. A curious smoky effect over the coast. I crawled and crept about the garden in the afternoon. I feel terribly weak and all the time on the verge of breaking down. Tried to work; could not work. At six o'clock went back to bed. Had a dreadful nightmare. Wrote Jack and Marie.

January 14 Foster came: says my lung is remarkably better, but must rest absolutely for two months and not attempt to walk at all. I have got a 'bigger chance'. Bell rang at night. My eye pains me. *Cannot* get a move on. Dreamed about Banks. She gave me her baby to look after. Heard from Jinnie.

January 15 Sat in my room watching the day change to evening. The fire like a golden stag. *Thinking of the past* always; dreaming it over. The cotton plant has turned yellow. To-night the sea is *douce*. P.O. strike. No, no letters.

> 'But I was called from the earth—yea, called
> Before my rose-bush grew;
> And would that now I knew
> What feels he of the tree I planted,
> And whether, after I was called
> To be a ghost, he, as of old,
> Gave me his heart anew.'
>
> (Thomas Hardy.)

January 16 Wrote and sent reviews. Stayed in bed, worked. Had a bath. The day was very lovely. I had to work hard. In the evening began my new story *A Strange Mistake*.[1] P.O. strike for letters *and* telegrams. At night I could not sleep. My life in London seems immeasurably far and all like a dream. L.M. talked of herself as a child.

[1]Subsequently called *The Wrong House*, but never finished.

January 17 Postal strike: no letters, no wires. Tearing up and sorting the old letters. The *feeling* that comes—the anguish—the words that fly out into one's breast: My *darling!* My *wife!* Oh, what anguish! Oh, will it ever be the same? Lay awake at night listening to the voices. Two men seemed to sing—a tenor and a baritone: then the drowned began. . . .

January 18 No letters: strike still on. A fine day. But what is that to me? I am an *invalid*. I spend my life in bed. Read Shakespeare in the morning. I feel I cannot bear this silence to-day. I am *haunted* by thoughts of Jack perpetually.

Dickinson's flowers and dog. And then little Flock and dark-eyed Catherina!! All the flowers and the two dogs. They seem to be running in and out among the jonquils. Flock puts his paws on the bed [*illegible*] and the sky and sea behind him and the chill, smoky air.

January 19 *All's Well that Ends Well; The Comedy of Errors.* No letters or papers. V. came; and Mrs. V. and Miss K.S. in white. 'The trouble I've had with you, Mrs. Murry, and the expense it's put me to—more fuss than if you'd died there.' The women against the flowers were so lovely—even Miss K.S. I had a dreadful crying fit about 'noise and cleanliness'. It was horrible.

January 20 *Twelfth Night.* Washed my hair. L.M. out all day. Here alone on a perfect day. I wandered in the garden. . . . and the flowers blew in the wind. There was a ship, white and solid on the water. Overcoat disappeared. The fire in my room and the double light. All was exquisitely beautiful. 'Good-bye.' It now believes we are going and it is safe.

January 21 *Measure for Measure.* A day like a dream. V.'s hair, stick, jacket, teeth, tie—all to be remembered. 'To use a *volgarism*, I'm fed up.' The journey—the flowers—and these women here. Jinnie's black satin neckcloth and pearl pin. This exquisite cleanliness turns me into a cat. Dreamed of Jeanne, Marie and Violet.

On January 21 Katherine finally left the Casetta for the Villa Flora, a nursing home in Mentone.

January 22 Saw the doctor: a fool. Thinking of Casetta left to itself: the little winds blowing, the shutters shut, the cotton plant turning yellow. Heard from J. wire and letter. Spent a day recovering. My heart tires me. The meals downstairs are a fearful strain. But the people newly risen.

January 23 Saw two of the doctors—an ass, and an ass. Spent the day at my window. It was very lovely and fair. But I was trying to work all day and could not get down to it. In the night had appalling nightmare.

January 24 Cousin Connie brought the tiny dog to see me—a ravishing animal. The same despairing desire to work, and could not work. I suppose I started reviewing Tchehov nine or ten times. Felt very tired as a result of this.

January 25 The meals here are a horror. Connie and Jinnie came. She is a really wonderful creature. Her gaze, her hands, her quietness. Both have this quiet restful [?] air. L.M. came *très embarrassée*—I don't know why. . . . I grudge L.M. money. It's very dreadful. I seem to be sitting hours and hours there, and the people are ugly. Nevertheless, thank God, I *am* here, in sound of the train, in reach of the post. Italian letters came to-day.[1]

January 26 Felt ill with fatigue and cold and my lungs hurt. It is because I am not working. All is a bit of a nightmare for that reason. My temper is so bad! I feel I am horrid and can't stop it. It's a bad feeling.

January 27 The woman who does the massage is not really any good. My life is queer here. I like my big airy room, but to *work* is so hard. At the back of my mind I am so wretched. But all the while I am thinking over my philosophy—the defeat of the personal.

January 28 I shall not remember what happened on this day. It is a blank. At the end of my life I may want it, may long to have

[1]Katherine has added, apparently a year later: 'A year has passed away . . . and that's all . . .'

it. There was a new moon: that I remember. But who came or what I did—all is lost. It's just a day missed, a day crossing the line.

January 29 I have received an abnormally selfish letter from Jack—telling me about Sussex. It has hurt me so much. The answer I wrote back. But I won't post it. I feel it must be a mistake. 'Drunken with the magnificence . . . pure sheer spring.'

January 30 No letter from him to-day—other letters came. I tried all day to work and feel *dog*-tired. Perhaps it's the massage. Jinnie came to see me and brought me a present from her little dog.

January 31 Changed my room for this other. I prefer it. It is more snug and there is only one bed. I sent reviews off to-day and a letter to Jack. W.G. [*The Westminster Gazette?*] sent a little. Wrote to several people. Father.

January Women walking across the fields to their men, idling in the swooning light, the sun trembling in the lemon-trees.

In the stillness the sound of the birds. Why hath the Lord not made *bun* trees?

Grey houses, red blinds, white mousseline curtains, and Oh! the replica within!

When the soldiers bent to strip, their hair blew in the wind. This gave them such a defenceless, *innocent* appearance.

I realised that I had been here before. There came a smell of wood and something dark, burnt out, and yet with a kind of glow still.

The street so smooth and arched like the curves of thought, and up there walked sailors with their bundles, very like flies carrying their eggs in the hot sun.

The trees at this hour look so full of leisure and inclined to the earth as though they were in love with the shape of their own shadows.

'How do you know, deep underground,
Hid in your bed from sight and sound,

Without a turn in temperature,
With weather life can scarce endure,
That light has won a fraction's strength,
And day put on some moment's length,
Whereof in merest rote will come,
Weeks hence, mild airs that do not numb;
O crocus root, how do you know,
How do you know?'
(Thomas Hardy.)

Winter Bird.

My darling, my darling,
Calling through the cold of afternoon
Those round, bright notes,
Each one so perfect,
Shaken from the other and yet
Hanging together in flashing clusters!
The small soft flowers and the ripe fruits—
All are gathered.
It is the season now of nuts and berries
And round, bright, flashing drops
In the frozen grass.

February 1 My room is horrible. Very noisy: a constant clatter and a feeling as though it were *doorless*. French people don't care a hang how much noise they make. I hate them for it. Stayed in bed; felt very ill, but didn't mind because of the reason. The food was really appalling: nothing to eat. At night *old Casetta* feelings, like madness. Voices and words and half-visions.

February 2 Connie and Jinnie came and the *Times* notice of my book [*Bliss*]. J. brought me more flowers. *Saw the lovely palm.* Work will win if only I can stick to it. It will win after all and through all.

February 3 No letter from John to-day. Went for a little walk in the garden and saw all the pale violets. The beauty of palm trees. To fall in love with a tree. [*illegible*] Heard the ladies in the Harem

talking. Japonica is a lovely flower, but people never grow enough of it.

February 4 Horrible day. I lay all day and *half* slept in this new way—hearing voices—drifting off. A letter card [*illegible*] and later a telegram and another card. [*illegible*]

Heard from Ottoline. The attendance here is really abominable. Wrote to Jack about the G. *Pension*. No good.

February 5 Went for a drive. All the way gay. The house and the girl. Couldn't work: slept again. Dreadful pain in joints. Jack talks of insurance and [*illegible*]. Fearfully *noisy* house! Saw an orange-tree, an exquisite shape against the sky: when the fruit is ripe the leaves are pale yellow.

February 6 Received Lawrence's last letter and reply from J. Determined to review two books to-day and to get on with *Second Helping*. Saw the *fool* of a doctor to-day, Diddle-dum-dum-dee! *Cod* is the only word! Bad-in-age! Flat-ter-ie! Gal-an-ter-ie! Frogs!!! Vous pouvez vous promener. *Liar*. The palm tree. Did not finish review; but no matter, it goes.

February 7 House in a perfect uproar. Dreadfully nervous. Dressmaker came and her little apprentice who gave me the flowers. Had a bath—but all was in a tearing hurry and clatter. Had a strange dream. 'She is one with the moonlight.' George Sand—ma sœur.

February 8 To Villa Flora. In the garden with the unhappy woman lying on the hard bench. Seeing them all at tea in their beauty. The Spanish brocade cloth—the piece of heliotrope. Jinnie's plan that I shall go and live there. Came back and wrote it all to J. in delight. Then a *nuit blanche*, dreadful nightmare. I for the first time think I should like to join the Roman Catholic Church. I must have *something*.

February 9 Hell. Letter from Jack. It was too much. I wept all the morning. In the afternoon sitting in the sun—alas, alas!

The sun is so warm, like summer. All's over, then. My dream was right.

Shortly afterwards Katherine left the nursing home to stay at the Villa Flora with her cousin Miss Beauchamp [Connie] and her friend Miss Fullerton [Jinnie], whose devoted care of her was rewarded by a marked improvement in her health.

Anguish.

The courier was so late. She rang and asked the eternal 'déjà passé?' and heard the eternal 'pas encore, Madame'. At last Armand appeared with a letter from him and the papers. The letter she read. She read to 'Don't give me up entirely.' When she read those words, it happened *again*, again there seemed to be a dreadful loud shaking and trembling: her heart leaped. She sank down in the bed. She began to weep and could not stop. What was he made of—to talk of them giving each other up? The cruel—the ghastly ice-cold cruelty. Never say again you have imagination—never say you have the capacity to love and that you know pity. You have said things to me that have wounded me for ever. I must go on, but I am wounded for ever by you.

The first bell rang. She got up, she began to dress, crying and cold. The second bell. She sat down and steeled herself; her throat ached, ached. She powdered herself thickly and went downstairs. In the *ascenseur*: 'Armand, cherchez-moi une voiture pour deux heures juste.' And then one hour and a quarter in the brilliant glaring noisy *salle*, sipping wine to stop crying, and seeing all the animals crack up the food. The waitress kept jerking her chair, offering food. It was no good. She left and went upstairs, but that was fatal. Have I a home? A little cat? Am I any man's *wife*? Is it all over? He never tells me a thing—never a thing—just all those entirely self-absorbed letters, and now just these notes. What will come next? He *asks* if I believe he loves me, and says 'Don't give me up,' but as though *perfectly prepared* for it. She wrote out the telegram. He is killing me, killing me. He wants to be free—that's all.

She dressed and went downstairs into the horrible hall, because there, with the *monde* drinking coffee and smoking cigarettes, she dared not cry. A little brougham drove up with an old dragging man. She got in. 'A la poste!' Oh, these little broughams, what I have gone through in them! the blue-buttoned interior, the blue cords and ivory tassels, all, all! She leaned back and lifted her veil and dried her tears. But it was no use. The post office was full. She had to wait in a queue for the telegrams among horrible men who shouted over her shoulder—horrible men. And now, where? A dose of sal volatile at the chemist's. While he made it up she walked quickly up and down the shop, twisting her hands. There was a box of Kolynos. It said Jack—Jack in her room, talking about the foam, saying he'd leave his behind. Four francs seventy-five.

She bought one and drank the mixture, and now, where? She got into the cab—the old man hung at the door—she couldn't speak. Suddenly down the road on the opposite side, looking very grave came Jinnie. She crossed over and taking her hand said 'Deo gratias.' And then was silent a moment. Then she said suddenly, 'Come along and see Rendall now. Let's fix it now this moment.' They waited in a very quiet room, rich with books and old dark coloured prints, and dark highly polished furniture. Jinnie went out for a preliminary talk and then came back for her and they entered the doctor's room. He was short, dry, with a clipped beard and fine shrewd eyes. A fire burned: there were books everywhere. German books too, reminding her of Croft Hill.[1] Jinnie stayed while the long familiar careful examination went on again. The doctor took infinite pains. When he had done she dressed, and Jinnie said: 'Doctor, it's the desire of my life to cure this—little friend of mine. You must let me have her, you must let me do it.' And after a pause which the other thought final, he said: 'I think it would be ideal for her to be with you. She ought not to have to suffer noise and the constant sight of repellent people. She is highly sensitive and her disease—of such long standing, has increased it a thousandfold.' He was quiet, grave

[1]Dr. Croft Hill had been our doctor in London, much admired by us both.

gentle. Oh, if they could have known or seen my heart that had been stabbed and stabbed. But she managed to smile and thank the doctor, and then Frances put her back into the brougham, and it was arranged she would leave in a week.

All the afternoon she had been seeing wallflowers. Let me never have a sprig of wallflowers—if ever I have a garden. Oh, anguish of life! Oh, bitter, bitter Life! He just threw her away. 'Well, don't give me up entirely.' That reminded her of wallflowers and Shakespeare. Yes, how in *A Winter's Tale*, Perdita refused gilly-flowers in her garden. 'They call them nature's bastards.' She came back into her room and lay down. It was like Bavaria again, but worse, worse—and now she could not take a drug, or anything. She must just *bear it and go on.*

February 11 Mrs. Dunn came in the afternoon and squeezed up on the chair, or crouched on the floor.

February 12 A lie is the unjust denial of the truth. She stood here. 'Yes, 64, dear,' said she and raised her hands. Can I help her? I want to. Here is a woman I would *love* to make a little happy—a great woman.[1]

'Something to do with lilacs'—an old air of France.

Le temps des lilas et le temps des roses
Ne reviendra plus ce printemps-ci,
Le temps des lilas et le temps des roses
Est passé—le temps des œillets aussi.

Le vent a changé—les cieux sont moroses
Et nous n'irons pas couper et cueillir
Les lilas en fleurs et les belles roses;
Le printemps est triste et ne put fleurir.

O joyeux et doux printemps de l'année
Qui vint, l'an passé, nous ensoleiller;
Notre fleur d'amour est si bien fânée
Las! que ton baiser ne peut l'éveiller.

[1]This refers to Jinnie Fullerton, whose birthday it was.

Et toi, que fais-tu? pas de fleurs écloses
Point de gai soleil ni d'ombrages frais;
Le temps des lilas et le temps des roses
Avec notre amour est mort à jamais.

Life's a queer thing. I read this to-day, and in my mind I heard it sung in a very pure voice to a piano, and it seemed to me to be part of the great pain of youthful love.

Wickedness.

I kissed her. Her cheek felt cold, white, and somehow moist. It was like kissing a church candle. I looked into her eyes: they were pale, flickering with dim, far-off lights. She smelled faintly of incense. Her skirt was rubbed and bulged at the knees.

'But how could you say that about the Blessed Virgin!' said she. 'It must have hurt Our Lady so terribly.'

And I saw the B.V. throwing away her copy of *Je ne parle pas Français* and saying: 'Really, this K.M. is all that her friends say of her to me.'

Roosters and Hens.

By night and at early morning I love to listen to my darling roosters crowing to one another from lonely yards. Each one has a different note: I have never heard two roosters crow alike. But the hens who seem from their cackle to be laying eggs all day long sound as like one another as . . . as . . . In fact there's no possible distinguishing between them. L.M. says they are not *all* laying eggs. Some of them are frightened, surprised, excited, or just—playful. But this seems to me to make the affair even *more* . . . humiliating.

The Glimpse.

And yet one has these 'glimpses', before which all that one ever has written (what has one written?)—all (yes, all) that one ever has read, pales. . . . The waves, as I drove home this afternoon, and the high foam, how it was suspended in the air before it fell. . . . What is it that happens in that moment of suspension? It is

timeless. In that moment (what *do* I mean?) the whole life of the soul is contained. One is flung up—out of life—one is 'held', and then,—down, bright, broken, glittering on to the rocks, tossed back, part of the ebb and flow.

I don't want to be sentimental. But while one hangs, suspended in the air, held,—while I watched the spray, I was conscious *for* life of the white sky with a web of torn grey over it; of the slipping, sliding, slithering sea; of the dark woods blotted against the cape; of the flowers on the tree I was passing; and more—of a huge cavern where my selves (who were like ancient sea-weed gatherers) mumbled, indifferent and intimate . . . and this other self apart in the carriage, grasping the cold knob of her umbrella, thinking of a ship, of ropes stiffened with white paint and the wet, flapping oilskins of sailors. . . . Shall one ever be at peace with oneself? Ever quiet and uninterrupted—without pain—with the one whom one loves under the same roof? Is it too much to ask?

February 29 Oh, to be a *writer*, a real writer given up to it and to it alone! Oh, I failed to-day; I turned back, looked over my shoulder, and immediately it happened, I felt as though I too were struck down. The day turned cold and dark on the instant. It seemed to belong to summer twilight in London, to the clang of the gates as they close the garden, to the deep light painting the high houses, to the smell of leaves and dust, to the lamp-light, to that stirring of the senses, to the langour of twilight, the breath of it on one's cheek, to all those things which (I feel to-day) are gone from me for ever. . . . I feel to-day that I shall die soon and suddenly: but not of my lungs.

There are moments when Dickens is possessed by this power of writing: he is carried away. That is bliss. It certainly is not shared by writers to-day. For instance, the death of Cheedle: dawn falling upon the edge of night. One realises exactly the mood of the writer and how he wrote, as it were, for himself, but it was not his will. He *was* the falling dawn, and he *was* the physician going to Bar. And again when . . .

April 4 Easter eggs in the folded napkins. A Happy Easter. I am given the Mass for the day to read. We drink to absent friends, but carelessly, not knowing whether to bow or no.

April 9 Schiffs are coming to tea. Cold and windy. Out of the window the writhing palms—the dust—the woman with a black veil. Mrs. D., knowing nothing of England: 'I'm an Imperialist.' Jinnie in bed. 'I like to be fair.' Connie lies on the couch and reads. I feel I must live alone, alone, alone—with *artists* only to come to the door. Every artist cuts off his ear and nails it on the outside of the door for the others to shout into.

April 11 I never can remember what happens. It is so without outline. 'Yesterday' pales into the general shade. But all the time one looks back and there are wonders. There is always Miss Helen stretching her hands out to the great defiant mosquito—crying with a kind of groan—'Oh, the *darlings!*' She flushed. That remains for ever. And then one must never forget the dog which gets all the love of children. 'Going nice ta-tas with Missie, my ducksie pet!'

April 12 Went to the fish museum at Monaco. Must remember the bubbles as the man plunged the rod into the tanks. The young girl. How naice! Young girls make me feel *forty*. Well, one certainly doesn't want to look 21. The woman with her three little children at Monte. . . .

At the end of April Katherine returned to England, to her house in Hampstead.

The Baby.

Call for him once a week!

'No!' he said, lowering his withered legs from the sofa and rubbing his knee-joints, 'I'll wait a bit yet before I'm called for.'

She was pinning on her hat in the mirror above the mantelpiece, but when he said that, she turned round and stared—a long pin in her hand. 'I'm sure I don't know what you mean,' she said loftily.

He sucked in his cheeks and rubbed away, blinking.

Even as he thought this, he collapsed, he fell sideways on the pillows, and suddenly . . . in a voice that he had never heard before—a high, queer, rasping voice that got louder, angrier and shiller every moment—he began to cry.

The Flowering of the Self.

When autograph albums were the fashion—sumptuous volumes bound in soft leather, and pages so delicately tinted that each tender sentiment had its own sunset sky to faint, to die upon—the popularity of that most sly, ambiguous, difficult piece of advice: 'To thine own self be true' was the despair of collectors. How dull it was, how boring, to have the same thing written six times over! And then, even if it was Shakespeare, that didn't prevent it—oh, *l'âge d'innocence!*—from being dreadfully obvious. Of course, it followed as the night the day that if one was true to oneself . . . True to oneself! which self? Which of my many—well really, that's what it looks like coming to—hundreds of selves? For what with complexes and repressions and reactions and vibrations and reflections, there are moments when I feel I am nothing but the small clerk of some hotel without a proprietor, who has all his work cut out to enter the names and hand the keys to the wilful guests.

Nevertheless, there are signs that we are intent as never before on trying to puzzle out, to live by, our own particular self. *Der Mensch muss frei sein*—free, disentangled, single. Is it not possible that the rage for confession, autobiography, especially for memories of earliest childhood, is explained by our persistent yet mysterious belief in a self which is continuous and permanent; which, untouched by all we acquire and all we shed, pushes a green spear through the dead leaves and through the mould, thrusts a scaled bud through years of darkness until, one day, the light discovers it and shakes the flower free and—we are alive—we are flowering for our moment upon the earth? This is the moment which, after all, we live for,—the moment of direct feeling when we are most ourselves and least personal.

(*July*, 1920.)

July 12 4 p.m. Injection at Harley St.

How beautiful little children are! I shall kneel before them and . . .

'Beside old Semyon he looked graceful and vigorous, but yet in his walk there was something just perceptible which betrayed in him a being already touched with decay, weak, and on the road to ruin.' (Tchehov: *The Schoolmistress.*)

August 8 A. B. B. [Anne Burnell Beauchamp: Katherine's mother] died August 8, 1918.

'How she would have loved
A party to-day!—
Bright-hatted and gloved,
With table and tray
And chairs on the lawn!
Her smiles would have shone
With welcomings . . . But
She is shut, she is shut
From friendship's spell
In the jailing shell
Of her tiny cell.'
(Thomas Hardy.)

I hate this book. So awfully!!

August 9 'And if a man will consider life in its whole circuit, and see how superabundantly it is furnished with what is extraordinary and beautiful and great, he shall soon know for what we were born.'

I should like to have a secret code to put on 'record' what I feel to-day. If I forget it, may my right hand forget its cunning . . . the lifted curtain . . . the hand at the fire with the ring and stretched fingers . . . no, it's snowing . . . the telegram to say he's not . . . just the words *arrive* 8.31. But if I say more I'll give myself away.

[Later.] I wrote this because there is a real danger of forgetting *that kind* of intensity, and it won't do.

December 8, 1920. No, there is *no* danger of forgetting.

August 9 I must ask Doctor Sorapure what is the immediate treatment for, and what are the symptoms of, fractured base.

August 12 More beautiful by far than a morning in spring or summer. The mist—the trees standing in it—not a leaf moves—not a breath stirs. There is a faint smell of burning. The sun comes slowly—slowly the room grows lighter. Suddenly, on the carpet, there is a square of pale, red light. The bird in the garden goes 'snip—snip—snip'—a little wheezy, like the sound of a knife-grinder. The nasturtiums blaze in the garden: their leaves are pale. On the lawn, his paws tucked under him, sits the black and white cat. . . .

I cough and cough and at each breath a dragging, boiling, bubbling sound is heard. I feel that my whole chest is boiling. I sip water, spit, sip, spit. I feel I must break my heart. And I can't expand my chest; it's as though the chest had collapsed. Life is—getting a new breath: nothing else counts. And J. is silent, hangs his head, hides his face with his fingers *as though* it were unendurable. 'This is what she is doing to me! Every fresh sound makes *my* nerves wince.' I know he can't help these feelings. But, oh God! how wrong they are. If he could only for a minute, serve ne, help me, give *himself* up. I can so imagine an account by him of a 'calamity'. 'I could do nothing all day, *my* hands trembled, I had a sensation of *utter* cold. At times I felt the strain would be unbearable, at others a *merciful numbness* . . .' and so on. What a fate to be self-imprisoned! What a ghastly fate! At such times I feel I never could get well with him. It's like having a cannon-ball tied to one's feet when one is trying not to drown. It is just like that.

Bought and Paid for. A bouquet—all her expenses—sometimes only vegetables to bring away. Fortune-teller and crystal-gazer.

The Dud. This is in Society. We know it all. Then Wyndham

is his friend and in his trouble appeals to him—*in vain*. One mustn't forget his writing-table, so exquisite, and his graceful style of reply. To write a letter was a little act of ritual. . . . His rooms are off Baker Street—Upper Gloucester Place, in fact.

'Can't you help me? Can't you?' But even while she asked him she smiled as if it didn't matter so much whether he could or couldn't.

My nature . . . my nerves . . . the question is whether I shall change or not. Per-sonally. . . . You see him? And he has a friend, a confidant, an old schoolfellow, small, shabby, with a wooden leg, whom he has re-discovered. He's married. The friend enters the new ménage. Little by little he gets to know the wife. No *tragedy*. He feels like a one-legged sparrow. Talking together in the house before she comes in. 'Is that you, Beaty? Can we have some tea?'

Let the sparrow—let the sparrow—suffer the sparrow to. . . .

Charades. Roger of course commits suicide, cuts his throat with a paper knife and gurgles his life away.

August 19 J. let fall this morning the fact that he *had* considered taking rooms in D.'s house this winter. Good. Was their relationship friendship? Oh no! He kissed her and held her arm and they were certainly conscious of a dash of something far more dangerous than *l'amitié pure*. And then he considered taking rooms in her house. He said, 'Doesn't H. live there, too?' But H. never had the very beginnings of such a relation with D. as J. knows. I suppose one always thinks the latest shock is the worst shock. This is quite unlike any other I have ever suffered. The lack of sensitiveness as far as I am concerned—the selfishness of this staggers me. This is what I must remember when I am away. J. thinks no more of me than of anybody else. I mean I am the same: the *degree* of his feeling is different, but it's the same feeling. I must remember he's one of my friends—no more. Who could count on such a man! To plan all this at such a time, and then on my return *the first words*: I must be nice to D. How disgustingly indecent! I am simply *disgusted* to my very soul.

I've read this over to-day (December 8, 1920) and now I wouldn't mind a straw if he went and lived there. Why on earth not? I don't love him less, but I do love him differently. I don't aspire to a *personal* life; I shall never know it. I must remind him to do so at Christmas.

And again I read this over (June 6, 1921) and it seemed to me very stupid and strange that we should have hidden from each other. By stupid I mean of course stupid in me to write such stuff.

And again (July 24, 1921). Neither stupid nor strange. We *both* failed.

'Then the train rattled among the housetops, and among the ragged sides of houses torn down to make way for it, and over the swarming streets and under the fruitful earth. . . . A little more, and again it roared across the river, a great rocket: spurning the watery turnings and doublings with ineffable contempt, and going straight to its end, as Father Time goes to his. To whom it is no matter what living waters run high or low, reflect the heavenly lights and darknesses, produce their little growth of weeds and flowers, turn here, turn there, are noisy or still, are troubled or at rest, for their course has one sure termination, though their sources and devices are many.

Then a carriage ride succeeded, near the solemn river, stealing away by night, as all things steal away, by night and by day, so quietly yielding to the attraction of the loadstone rock Eternity. . .

(*Our Mutual Friend.*)

Dickens on Death. It's always the same gesture. What does it imply?

A Dance at the ——.

Is Life going to be all like this? thought Laura. And she lay down in bed and put her arms round the pillow, and the pillow whispered: 'Yes, this is what Life is going to be like—only always more and more splendid—more and more marvellous!'

'But supposing,' said Laura, speaking very fast and with the greatest possible earnestness, 'supposing you were terrifically

successful and were married to the person you adored, and you had every single thing you wanted,—and your first child was just born (that's supposed to be a marvellous moment, isn't it?), would you be really happier than you are now?'

They stared hard at each other a moment.

'I simply couldn't be.'

At his words Laura gave a beaming smile, a great sigh, and squeezed her brother's arm. 'Oh, what a relief!' she said. 'Neither could I—not possible.'

'Laura! Laurie! What *are* you doing up there? Come down at once. The N.'s have arrived!'

Laura stooped down and kissed her grandmother. 'You're by far the most beautiful girl in the rooms, my little precious!' she whispered.

As Grandma passed on, the Major and Laura suddenly turned round to catch her eye. She raised her eyebrows in a very childish astounded way, and sucked in her cheeks. The old woman actually blushed.

The Wordsworths.

'All the Journals contain numerous trivial details, which bear ample witness to the "plain living and high thinking" of the Wordsworth household—and, in this edition, samples of those details are given—but there is no neeed to record all the cases in which the sister wrote, "To-day I mended William's shirts", or "William gathered sticks", or "I went in search of eggs", etc. etc.' (W. Knight: Introduction to *Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal.*)

There is! Fool!

'I went through the fields, and sat for an hour afraid to pass a cow. The cow looked at me, and I looked at the cow, and whenever I stirred the cow gave over eating.' (Dorothy Wordsworth.)

'I have thoughts that are fed by the sun.' (Dorothy Wordsworth.)

It was Southey who made the charming remark that no house was complete unless it had in it a child rising six years and a kitten rising six months.

Charles Lamb.

'Dear Manning,—Certainly you could not have called at all hours from two till ten, for we have been only out of an evening Monday and Tuesday this week. But if you think you have, your thought shall go for the deed. We did pray for you on Wednesday night: Oysters unusually luscious—pearls of extraordinary magnitude formed in them. I have made bracelets of them—given them in clusters to ladies.

Last night we went out in despite, because you were not to come at your hour.

This night we shall be at home, so shall we certainly both Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. Take your choice, mind I don't say of one, but choose which evening you will not, and come the other four. Doors open at five o'clock. Shells forced about nine. Every gentleman smokes or not as he pleases. O! I forgot, bring the £10, for fear you should lose it. C. L.'

A 'darling' letter!

'He woke and still with his eyes closed he turned and kissed her shoulder.' That's a good beginning.

After the talk with Dunning there *is* a change.

I believe that D. has the secret of my recovery and J.'s awakening. All that he spoke of yesterday . . . the terms were strange, but what he *said* was what she had known for a long time. He made the Casetta story plainer. I saw how it could be made to 'fit'.

But this short sketch for Boulestin must be extremely simple and yet decisive. . . . It must not be in even the slightest degree 'thin'. If I can include the glittering sheep, the pond, the . . .[1]

Twelfth Night. Viola.

'If we should be a prey, how much 'twere better
To fall before the lion than the wolf.'

[1]The sketch which Katherine then had in mind for Marcel Boulestin's *Keepsake* apparently developed into 'At the Bay'.

Some are born . . . , some achieve . . . , and some have . . . thrust upon them . . .

At mid-day the Walking Club streamed through the ancient beautiful gates and clattered over the cobble-stones of the inn courtyard. They disturbed a great ring of blue and white pigeons pecking among the stones; away they flew with a soft clapping.
(*Second Helping.*)

'Something to do with Lilacs—an old air of France.'

Le temps des lilas et le temps des roses
Ne viendra plus ce printemps-ci.

The Persones Tales.

He is a jabbere and a gabbere.

I think the only thing which is really bad about me, really incurable, is my temper.

'Courage, my darling!' But the soft word was fatal. Down fell her tears.

''Tis a morning to tempt Jove from his ningle.'

The inaudible and noiseless foot of time.

The word which haunts me is *egocentric.*

Rising above all pain, and all infirmity—rising above everything.

The little heads were like pink fondants in a girl's lined chocolate-box.

'You can invent anything you like, but you can't invent psychology.' (Tolstoy to Tchehov.)

At Mary Rose.

'It's something I know. I *must* have heard it.' Her head was bound with old purple grapes.

The introductory music raking the hard soil of our hearts and preparing it for fairy seed.

The voices of the singers were like celestial *gargling,* said I. Housekeeper in the cross-eye tradition. The Australian soldier *rattles* on the stairs. His whole manner, and the loud voices. They

should have been all vague and remote. The light should have been dim.

'He's very complicated, Barrie, but charming—oh, so charming!'

'Modern—quite modern. The same author. Married 16, married twice. Boy about 8. Very handsome—awfully sweet beautiful woman. Robert Loraine splendid—terrible fantasy—delightful.'

'I like New York better. It's more moving. London so quiet. I like plenty of life.'

Act I, Sc. 1. The clergyman is a little fantastic. The other man overacts. We'll be good, won't we? Fantastic. The scene on the island is *terrific*. It is a terrible *idea*. And as soon as it was over—the tea, the Maid of the Mountains. Quick, quick, quick! And the heads—the old heads and the young heads.

'How he ever thought of it is beyond me!'

'£50 for something worth about 2d. I bought things for £1000.'

'But they don't progress do they? They don't go out into the world. Is that good for a country? . . . Oh, a lovely life! I should love my husband to be a farmer. . . . But the natives are nice, aren't they, when they're young?'

'First it was the linnets, and then the sea.'

'Trench no. 30. The day of the attack. I got the orders by phone and scrambled off with them to my officer—putting a 2 franc piece down my collar, inside my shirt, for luck. We all sat together. I knew it was all up with me. So did Austen. Our number was up. The feeling of *waste*. My hand on the hilt of a revolver. You can always turn it on yourself.'

'Some people *are* really. . . . The man who keeps improving his charwoman is 30 francs to the good.'

'It's always the nearest man who's killed. I chose a safer position. If I could get back the little beggar should have what he wanted.

. . . But I shan't get back. They suggest a slight wound. But not for me.'

A few days ago I went to see Mr. Barrie's as-successful-as-ever play *Mary Rose*, and what impressed me chiefly were the extraordinary efforts considered necessary to prepare the audience for something strange, something out of the common, something which does not happen every day in that block of residential flats over the way. To begin with, while the lights still glared, the orchestra banged the good old 'Gondoliers' about our heads, to such good effect that the lady in front of me did pause, did say to her friend: 'My dear, don't I know that? Isn't it Carmen?' And then, before the curtain rose, the shaded lights, one by one, fainted, failed, gave up their little souls, and left us in the dark exposed to a kind of emotional raking process by the violins and violas, whereby the hard stony soil of our reluctant hearts was broken up and prepared for the magic seed the wizard should scatter. Voices joined the instruments, wordless, rising and falling in what sounded to be celestial gargling. . . .

September The daughter of the watch-smith. Her piano-playing. Her weak heart, queer face, queer voice, *awful clothes*. The violets in their garden. Her little mother and father. The scene at the Baths: the coldness, the blueness of the children, her size in the red twill bathing-dress, trimmed with white braid. The steps down to the water—the rope across.

Edie has a brother Siegfried. 17. You never know whether he has begun to shave or not. He and Edie walk in arm in arm. . . . Her Sunday hat is *trimmed beyond words*.

Oh, that tree at the corner of May Street! I forgot it until this moment. It was dark and hung over the street like a great shadow. The father was fair and youthful to look at. He was a clock-maker.

Books to take away: Robinson Crusoe; Pilgrim's Progress; Coleridge, Biographia Literaria and Lectures on Shakespeare; one or two Jane Austen; Shakespeare and the O.B.E.V. [The Oxford

Book of English Verse]; The Sea and the Jungle; Chaucer's Canterbury Tales; Spenser's Faerie Queene.

The following entries belong to September 1920, *and were made on the journey to the Villa Isola Bella at Mentone, where Katherine spent the winter of that year.*

Feminine Psychology.

'It is said that the turtledove never drinks clear water, but always muddies it first with its foot so that it may the better suit its pensive mind.'

Isola Bella: How shall I buy it?

Southward Bound.

Lying facing the window I woke early. The blind was half pulled down. A deep pink light flew in the sky, and the shapes of the trees, ancient barns, towers, walls were all black. The pools and rivers were quicksilver. Nearing Avignon, the orchard in the first rays of sunlight shone with gold fruit: apples flashed like stars.

L.M.'s legs dangled. She dropped down, slowly waving her big grey legs, as though something pulled her, dragged her—the tangle of rich blue weeds on the red carpet.

'A-vig . . . Avig . . . Avig-non,' she said.

'One of the loveliest names in the world done to death,' said I. 'A name that spans the ancient town like a delicate bridge.'

She was very impressed. But then George Moore *would* impress her.

Woman and Woman.

What I feel is: She is never for one fraction of a second unconscious. If I sigh, I know that her head lifts. I know that those grave large eyes solemnly fix on me: Why did she sigh? If I turn she suggests a cushion or another rug. If I turn again, then it is my back. Might she try to rub it for me? There is no escape. All night: a faint rustle, the smallest cough, and her soft voice asks: 'Did you

speak? Can I do anything?' If I do absolutely nothing then she discovers my fatigue under my eyes. There is something profound and terrible in this eternal desire to establish contact.

Man and Woman.

Mysterious is man and woman. She sat on the flat seat in the corridor and he stood above her while the dark fat man beat them up a couple of beds. She looked sulky, stubborn and bored. But it was plain to see she suited him.

'Bang on the door when you're ready, old girl!'

And the door slammed. He sat on the flap-seat, smoothed his thin smooth hair, folded his bony hands. A neat foot dangled from a trim ankle. The light shone on his glasses. Seeing him thus one could not imagine a man who looked less like a woman's man. But I admired him immensely. I was proud of them as 'made in England'.

Breakfast Time.

It grew hot. Everywhere the light quivered green-gold. The white soft road unrolled, with plane-trees casting a trembling shade. There were piles of pumpkins and gourds: outside the house the tomatoes were spread in the sun. Blue flowers and red flowers and tufts of deep purple flared in the road-side hedges. A young boy, carrying a branch, stumbled across a yellow field, followed by a brown high-stepping little goat. We bought figs for breakfast, immense thin-skinned ones. They broke in one's fingers and tasted of wine and honey. Why is the northern fig such a chaste fair-haired virgin, such a *soprano*? The melting contraltos sing through the ages.

England and France.

The great difference: England so rich, with the green bowers of the hops and gay women and children with their arms lifted, pausing to watch the train. A flock of yellow hens, led by a red rooster, streamed across the edge of the field. But France: an old man in a white blouse was cutting a field of small clover with an old-fashioned half-wooden scythe. The tops of the flowers were

burnt; the stooks (are they stooks?) were like small heaps of half-burned tobacco.

En Voyage.

Four little boys, one minute, three larking. When the three ran on to the lines and tried to dash themselves to death, the little one obviously suffered tortures and did his best to drag them back again. I realized this would have been just the same if it had been deep water.

An old man, an old woman, and a tiny boy in a cape. When the old woman disappeared, the ancient took the little boy with such tender care. He had a little pipe in his beard. It looked as though his beard were curling.

Poplars springing in green water—red willows.

Tea on the Train.

A man poked his head in at the door and said tea was served.

'Tea! Dear me!' she fussed at once. 'Would you care to go? . . . Shall we, do you think? On the other hand, I have some tea here. I'm afraid it will not be very good. Tea that is not fresh . . . and then there is that odd taste—what it is I do not know, but . . . Shall we care to try it?'

'Might as well.'

'In that case, dear, perhaps you would not mind lifting down my suit-case? I am sorry to say the tea is in there. Such a bother! These racks are so very high. I think they are decidedly higher than the English racks. Mind! Do take care! Oh!'

He: 'Ugh!'

Finally, she spread out a piece of paper, put on it a little cup and an odd saucer, the top of the thermos flask, a medicine bottle of milk, and some sugar in a lozenge-tin. 'I am very much afraid . . .' said she. 'Would you like me to try it first?'

He looked over the top of his paper and said drily: 'Pour it out!'

She poured it out, and gave him the cup and saucer, of course, while she gave the most uncomfortable little dripping cup in the

world to herself and sipped, anxiously watching him. 'It is so very . . .?'

'Might be worse!'

Fidgeting in her handbag, first she pulled out a powder-puff, then a nice substantial handkerchief, and then a paper parcel that held a very large wedge of cake—of the kind known as Dundee.

This she cut with a penknife, while he watched with some emotion.

'This is the last of our precious Dundee,' said she, shaking her head over it, and cutting it so tenderly that it almost seemed an act of cannibalism.

'That's one thing I have learned,' said he, 'and that is never to come abroad without one of Buszard's Dundees.'

Oh, how she agreed!

And each taking a large wedge, they bit into it and ate solemnly with round astonished eyes like little children in a confectioner's shop who are allowed to eat sitting up to the counter.

'More tea, dear?'

'No thanks.'

She: '?' A glance. (I sympathise with her glance for reply.)

'I think I will just have a cup,' said she gaily, so relieved to have a cup after all.

Another dive into the bag and chocolate was produced.

Chocolate! I had not realised before that chocolate is offered playfully. It is not a solemn food. It's as though one thought it rather absurd. But then—who knows? Perhaps . . .

'What?' said he, and peered over the paper. 'No, no!' dismissing the chocolate.

She had thought as much.

And having torn up little shreds of paper and wiped the cup and saucer and the knife clean, she packed it all tight again. But a final rummage in the bag produced an oval-shaped paper, which unwrapped was an egg! This sight seemed to fill her with amazement. But she must have known the egg was there. She did not look as though she had. Bright-eyed, her head on one side, she stared; and I fancied I heard an interrogatory clucking. . . .

Marie.[1]

October. She is little and grey with periwinkle—I feel inclined to write peritwinkle—blue eyes and swift, sweeping gestures. Annette said she is 'une personne très supérieure—la veuve d'un cocher,' and 'qu'elle a son appartement à Nice. . . . Mais, que voulez-vous? La vie est si chère. On est forcé.' But Marie does not look like any of these imposing, substantial things. She is far too gay, too laughing, too light, to have ever been more than a feather in the coachman's hat. As to an *appartement*, I suspect it was a chair at a window which overlooked a market.

Throttling, strangling by the throat, a helpless, exhausted little black silk bag.

But one says not a word and to the best of one's belief gives no sign. I went out into the gentle rain and saw the rainbow. It deepens; it shone down into the sea and it faded: it was gone. The small gentle rain fell on the other side of the world. Frail—frail. I felt Life was no more than this.

Marie and the Cauliflower.

'*Mon pauvre mari* rolled over and said: *Tu as peur? Que tu es bête! Ce sont des rats. Dors encore*.' I thought, after she'd told me, and these words kept rippling and rippling through my mind, something had disturbed the long silent forgotten surface. How many of his words were remembered? Did anybody ever quote the living words he'd spoken? '*Tu as peur? Que tu es bête!*' Words spoken at night, in the dark, strangely intimate, reassuring. He turned over and lifted himself in his grave as Marie spoke. Mournful, mournful. . . .

'What about a cauliflower?' I said. 'A cauliflower with white sauce.'

'But they are so dear, Madame,' wailed Marie. 'So dear. One little cauliflower for 2 fr. 50. It's robbery, it's . . .'

Suddenly through the kitchen window I saw the moon. It was so marvellously beautiful that I walked out of the kitchen door, through the garden and leaned over the gate before I knew what

[1]The *bonne* at the Villa Isola Bella.

I was doing. The cold bars of the gate stopped me. The moon was full, transparent, glittering. It hung over the sighing sea. I looked at it for a long time. Then I turned round, and the little house faced me—a little white house quivering with light, a house like a candle shining behind a feather of mimosa-tree. I had utterly forgotten these things when I was ordering the dinner. I went back to the kitchen.

'Let us have a cauliflower at any price,' I said firmly.

And Marie muttered, bending over a pot—*could* she have understood?—'*En effet*, the times are dangerous!'

Foundlings.

'Does nobody want that piece of bread and butter?' says L.M. You would really think from her tone that she was saving the poor little darling from the river or worse, willing to adopt it as her own child and bring it up so that it never should know it was once unwanted. She cannot bear to see solitary little pieces of bread and butter or a lonely little cake—or even a lump of sugar that someone has cruelly, heartlessly left in his saucer. And when you offer her the big cake, she says resignedly: 'Oh, well, my dear, I'll just try a slice,' as though she knew how sensitive and easily hurt the poor old chap's feelings were, if he's passed by. After all, it can't hurt her.

L.M. is also exceedingly fond of bananas. But she eats them so slowly, so terribly slowly. And they know it—somehow; they realise what is in store for them when she reaches out her hand. I have seen bananas turn absolutely livid with terror on her plate—or pale as ashes.

The Kiss.

. . . I kissed her. Her flesh felt cold, pale, soft. I thought of nuns who have prayed all night in cold churches. . . . All her warmth and colour and passion she had offered up in prayer, in cold ancient churches. . . . She was chill, severe, pale; the light flickered in her raised eyes like the light of candles; her skirt was worn shiny over her peaked knees; she smelled faintly of incense. 'No, Father. Yes,

Father. Do you think so, Father?' (But still I haven't said what I wanted to say.)

The Doll.

October 18, 1920 'Well, look!' muttered Miss Sparrow.[1] 'I've nothing to be ashamed of. Look as much as you like. I defy you. It's what I've wanted all my life,' she cried brokenly, 'and now I've got it. I defy you. I defy the world!' And she drew herself up in front of the window, proudly, proudly; her eyes flashed, her lips gleamed. She pressed the doll to her flat bosom. She was the Unmarried Mother.

Of course, I *can't* write that. I'm surprised to have made such a crude note. That's the raw idea, as they say. What I ought to do, though, is to write it, *somehow*, immediately, even if it's not good enough to print. My chief fault, my overwhelming fault is *not writing* it out. Well, now that I know it (and the disease is of very long standing) why don't I begin, at least, to follow a definite treatment? It is my experience that when an 'evil' is recognised, *any* delay in attempting to eradicate it is fatally weakening. And I, who love order, with my mania for the 'clean sweep', for every single thing being ship-shape—I to know there's such an ugly spot in my mind! Weeds flourish in neglect. I must keep my garden open to the light and in order. I must at all costs plant these bulbs and not leave them (oh, shameful!) to rot on the garden paths. To-day (October 18, 1920) is Monday. I have raised my right hand and sworn. Am I ever happy except when overcoming difficulties? Never. Am I ever free from the sense of guilt, even? Never. After I had finished that slight sketch, *The Young Girl*, wasn't there a moment which surpasses all other moments? Oh, yes. Then—why do you hesitate? How can you? I take my oath. Not one day shall pass without I write something—original.

Coleridge's Table Talk.

'It is intolerable when men, who have no other knowledge, have not even a competent understanding of that world in which they are always living, and to which they refer everything.'

[1]See entry of January 24, 1922.

Hear! Hear!

'Although contemporary events obscure past events in a living man's life, yet, so soon as he is dead, and his whole life is a matter of history, one action stands out as conspicuously as another.'

Totally wrong!

'Intense study of the Bible will keep any writer from being *vulgar* in point of style.'

In point of *language*.

'I, for one, do not call the sod under my feet my country. But language, religion, laws, government, blood—identity in these makes men of one country.'

The sod under my feet makes *mine*.

' "Most women have no character at all," said Pope, and meant it for satire. Shakespeare, who knew man and woman much better, saw that it, in fact, was the perfection of woman to be characterless. Everyone wishes a Desdemona or Ophelia for a wife—creatures who, though they may not always understand you, do always feel you and feel with you.'

Now you are being silly.

Coleridge's Lectures on Shakespeare.

Stage Illusion.

'Not only are we never absolutely deluded—or anything like it, but the attempt to cause the highest delusion possible to beings in their senses sitting in a theatre, is a gross fault, incident only to low minds, which, feeling that they cannot affect the heart or head permanently, endeavour to call forth the momentary affections. There ought never to be more pain than is compatible with co-existing pleasure, and to be amply repaid by thought.'

That is superb. Tchehov *v*. Barrie. Think here of *The Cherry Orchard*, where orchard, birds, etc., are quite unnnecessary. The whole effect of dawn is produced by *blowing out the candle*.

An author should 'have felt so deeply on certain subjects, or in consequence of certain imaginations, as to make it *almost a necessity of his nature to seek for sympathy*—no doubt, with that honourable desire of permanent action which distinguishes genius.'

'It is to be lamented that we judge of books by books, instead of referring what we read to our own experience.'

'The second . . . distinct cause of this diseased disposition of taste [i.e. perceiving strangeness in the language of the poetic drama where we should feel exultation] is . . . the security, the comparative equability and *ever-increasing sameness of human life*.'

No! No! No!

'In his very first productions, Shakespeare projected his mind out of his own particular being, and felt, and made others feel, on subjects no way connected with himself, except by force of contemplation and that sublime faculty by which a great mind becomes that on which it meditates.'

Thou hast said it, Coleridge!

'Or again imagination acts by so carrying on the eye of the reader as to make him almost lose the consciousness of words,—to make him see everything flashed, as Wordsworth has grandly and appropriately said,—

> *Flashed* upon that inward eye.
> Which is the bliss of solitude.

And this without exciting any painful or laborious attention, without *any anatomy of description*, (a fault not uncommon in descriptive poetry)—but with the sweetness and easy movement of nature.'

'There are men who can write passages of deepest pathos and even sublimity on circumstances personal to themselves and stimulative of their own passions; but they are not, therefore, on this account poets.'

Oh, Coleridge!

'It is my earnest desire—my passionate endeavour—to enforce at various times and by various arguments and instances the close and reciprocal connexion of just taste with pure morality. Without that acquaintance with the heart of man, or that docility and childlike gladness to be made acquainted with it, which those only can have who dare look at their own hearts—and that with a steadiness which religion only has the power of reconciling with

sincere humility;—without this, and the modesty produced by it, I am deeply convinced that no man, however wide his erudition, however patient his antiquarian researches, can possibly understand, or be worthy of understanding the writings of Shakespeare.'

Thou—thou art the man with whom I would speak. Should we mean the same by religion? We should not quarrel. (*October* 21, 1920.)

'Hamlet's wildness is but half false; he plays that subtle trick of pretending to act only when he is very near really being what he acts.'

Profound.

'*Banquo:*

The earth hath bubbles, as the water has
And these are of them:—Whither are they vanished?

Macbeth:

Into the air; and what seemed corporal, melted
As breath into the wind.—Would they had staid!

Is it too minute to notice the appropriateness of the simile "as breath", etc., in a cold climate?'

No; it's perfect.

Coleridge on Hamlet.

'Anything finer than this conception and working out of a great character is merely impossible. Shakespeare wished to impress upon us the truth, that action is the chief end of existence—that no faculties of intellect, however brilliant, can be considered valuable, or indeed otherwise than as misfortunes, if they withdraw us from, or render us repugnant to action, and lead us to think and think of doing, until the time has elapsed when we can do anything effectually. In enforcing this moral truth, Shakespeare has shown the fullness and force of his powers; all that is amiable and excellent in nature is combined in Hamlet, with the exception of one quality. He is a man living in meditation, called upon to act by every motive human and divine, but the great

object of his life is defeated by continually resolving to do, yet doing nothing but resolve.'

Who could understand that better than thou, Coleridge? I have no doubt that thou wert accusing thyself . . . And yet I wonder whether all great men, however developed their power of action, do not always think thus of themselves. They are ridden by the desire to act, and the performance is only the step to another . . . In another sense Fleance always escapes. (Or was that because Macbeth merely employed his murderers?) Be that as it may, Macbeth holds this phrase which has in it every faintest atom of the feelings of a writer: *This restlessness of ecstasy.*

This book [Coleridge's *Essays and Lectures on Shakespeare*] is certainly a great treasure. But I like to 'record' that there is much in it which was suited only to its time. I feel we have advanced very far since the days of Coleridge, and that he (because he is so restrained and handicapped by his *audience*) would have been far more enlightening about Shakespeare to-day.

Keats's Letters.

'When I have been, or supposed myself in health . . .'

'How astonishingly (here I must premise that illness, as far as I can judge in so short a time, has relieved my mind of a load of deceptive thoughts and images, and makes me perceive things in a truer light),—how astonishingly does the chance of leaving the word impress a sense of its natural beauties upon us! Like poor Falstaff, though I do not "babble", I think of green fields; I muse with the greatest affection on every flower I have known since my infancy—their shapes and colours are as new to me as if I had just created them with a superhuman fancy. It is because they are connected with the most thoughtless and the happiest moments of our lives. I have seen foreign flowers in hot-houses, of the most beautiful nature, but I do not care a straw for them. The simple flowers of our Spring are what I want to see again.' (*February* 16, 1820.)

'Nothing is so bad as want of health—it makes one envy scavengers and cinder-sifters.' (*August* 23, 1820.)

'Well may you exclaim, how selfish to wish me to be unhappy. You must be so if you love me. Upon my soul, I can be contented with nothing else. If you would really what is call'd enjoy yourself at a Party—if you can smile in people's faces, and wish them to admire you *now*—you never have, nor ever will love me . . . I wish you seriously to look over my letters kind and unkind and consider whether the Person who wrote them can be able to endure much longer the agonies and uncertainties which you are so peculiarly made to create.' (*May*, 1820.)

'They talk of my going to Italy. 'Tis certain I shall never recover if I am to be so long separate from you.' (*July* 5, 1820.)

Oh, hear it!

December 8 [See under August 9 and August 19, 1920.]

By all the laws of the M. & P.
This book is bound to belong to me.
Besides I am sure that you agree
I am the English Anton T.[1]

God forgive me, Tchehov, for my impertinence. (*December* 12, 1920.)

December 14 *Longing*. Madame Lavena. He kissed and kissed the dark sweet-smelling hand with the silver ring. Pa-pa! Pa-pa!

The baby became covered with inkspots and served as a little reminder for days and days of the things she had forgotten to say and the things she might have said differently.

December 16 'As soon as you speak of male and female—for instance, of the fact that the female spider, after fertilization devours the male—his eyes glow with curiosity, his face brightens, and the man revives in fact. All his thoughts, however noble, lofty or neutral they may be, have all one point of resemblance. You walk along the street and meet a donkey, for instance. . . . "Tell me, please," he asks, "what would happen if you mated a donkey with a camel?" And his dreams! Has he told you of his dreams?

[1]This was written, presumably in 1917, on the fly-leaf of a book of Tchehov's stories belonging to J.M.M.

It is magnificent! First, he dreams that he is married to the moon, then that he is summoned before the police and ordered to live with a guitar.' (Tchehov: *The Duel.*)

Oh, darling Tchehov! I was in misery to-night—ill, unhappy, despondent, and you made me laugh . . . and forget, my precious friend!

The Stranger.

'You merely find yourself in the old position of trying to change me. And I refuse to be changed. I won't change. If I don't feel these things, I don't feel them, and there's an end of it.'

For a moment he stood there, cold, frigid, grasping the door-handle, staring not at her, but over her head. He looked like a stranger who had opened her door by accident, and felt it necessary for some reason or other, to explain the accident before he closed it again and went out of her life for ever.

Why Suffer?

'I don't want you to be other than yourself . . .'

'But if I am myself, I won't do what you ask me to do. . . . I feel it's forcing me. It's not *me*; it's not my *geste*.'

They looked at each other, for some reason they smiled, actually *smiled.*

'I really and truly don't *know* what I want to do. Life isn't so simple as all that, you know. . . .'

And the music went on, gay, soothing, reassuring. All will be well, said the music. Life is so easy . . . so easy. Why suffer?

He shivered faintly and held up . . . but he seemed to smile.

But if you knew, I am looking out of a *dark, dark net.*

It's only an accident that it's I sitting beside him.

This is the music when the elephants come in to drink out of bottles. Then the clown comes in and takes away the bottles and drinks himself.

But the champagne was no good at all. It might have been water. I had to drink it because it was there, but there was some-

thing positively malicious in the way the little bubbles hurled themselves to the brim, danced, broke. They seemed to be jeering at me.

I thought, a few minutes ago, that I could have written a whole novel about a *Liar*. A man who was devoted to his wife, but who lied. But I couldn't. I couldn't write a whole novel about anything. I suppose I shall write stories about it. But at this moment I can't get through to anything. There's something like a wall of sand between me and the whole of my 'world'. I feel as though I am *dirty* or *disgusted* or both. Everything I think of seems false.

Suffering.

I should like this to be accepted as my confession.

There is no limit to human suffering. When one thinks: 'Now I have touched the bottom of the sea—now I can go no deeper,' one goes deeper. And so it is for ever. I thought last year in Italy: Any shadow more would be death. But this year has been so much more terrible that I think with affection of the Casetta! Suffering is boundless, it is eternity. One pang is eternal torment. Physical suffering is—child's play. To have one's breast crushed by a great stone—one could laugh!

I do not want to die without leaving a record of my belief that suffering can be overcome. For I do believe it. What must one do? There is no question of what Jack calls 'passing beyond it'. This is false.

One must *submit*. Do not resist. Take it. Be overwhelmed. Accept it fully. Make it *part of life*.

Everything in life that we really accept undergoes a change. So suffering must become Love. This is the mystery. This is what I must do. I must pass from personal love which has failed me to greater love. I must give to the whole of life what I gave to him. The present agony will pass—if it doesn't kill.

It won't last. Now I am like a man who has had his heart torn out—but—bear it—bear it! As in the physical world, so in the spiritual world, pain does not last for ever. It is only so terribly

acute now. It is as though a ghastly accident had happened. If I can cease reliving all the shock and horror of it, cease going over it, I will get stronger.

Here, for a strange reason, rises the figure of Doctor Sorapure. He was a good man. He helped me not only to bear pain, but suggested that perhaps bodily ill-health is necessary, is a repairing process, and he was always telling me to consider how man plays but a part in the history of the world. My simple kindly doctor was pure of heart, as Tchehov is pure of heart. But for these ills one is one's own doctor. If 'suffering' is not a repairing process I will make it so. I will learn the lesson it teaches. These are not idle words. These are not the consolations of the sick.

Life is a mystery. The fearful pain of these letters will fade. I must turn to *work*. I must put my agony into something, change it. 'Sorrow shall be changed into joy.'

It is to lose oneself more utterly, to love more deeply, to feel oneself part of life—not separate.

Oh Life! accept me—make me worthy—teach me.

I write that. I look up. The leaves move in the garden, the sky is pale, and I catch myself weeping. It is hard—it is hard to make a good death . . .

But *no, no!* I must not blame him any more, and I must not go back. Thus was it. Let it be.

To live—to live—that is all. And to leave life on this earth as Tchehov left life and Tolstoi.

After a dreadful operation, I remember that when I thought of the pain of being stretched out, I used to cry. Every time, I felt it again, and winced, and it was unbearable.

That is what one must control. Queer! The two people left are Tchehov—dead—and unheeding, indifferent Doctor Sorapure. They are the two good men I have known.

December 19, 1920. KATHERINE MANSFIELD

Peace of Mind.

Peace of mind. What is peace of mind? Did I ever have it? It seems 'Yes', yet perhaps that is only deception. But at Bandol,

for instance, or even at Hampstead? Ah, who knows? The other will not give up his secret. What *is* it? He evades the answer. 'I swear on my honour', 'Look here, I'm absolutely in the dark'. She cannot believe, and yet she has to believe. She *does* not believe. The letters *disappear*. All the other letters are left on the table, but not those. Why? I am to forget everything—to behave as though everything has not been. But I *can't*. Because I don't know what has been, I only know he denies a wrong (not an obvious wrong) which was committed. It must have been committed. People don't write like that *pour rien—de l'amitié pure*. So whenever I look at him, and whenever I am with him, there is that *secret*, and I can't give him all I long to give him, nor can I *rest* in him because of it. I have no abiding place. Peace of mind. Yes, I had it when I was first here. Yes, I had it fully when I wrote *Miss Brill*.

No, I've been poisoned by these 'letters'. How *can* he know someone so 'strange' to me? to us? Not only know her, but cherish her?

In the white lace, the spreading veil and the pearls, she looked like a gull. But a quick hungry gull with an absolutely insatiable appetite for bread. 'Come, feed me! Feed me!' said that quick glare.

The Change.

For a long time she said she did not want to change anything in him, and she meant it. Yet she hated things in him, and wished they were otherwise. Then she said she did not want to change anything in him and she meant it. And the dark things that she had hated she now regarded with indifference. Then she said she did not want to change anything in him. But now she loved him so that even the dark things she loved, too. She wished them there; she was not indifferent. Still they were dark and strange, but she loved them. And it was for this they had been waiting. They changed. They shed their darkness—the curse was lifted and they shone forth as Royal Princes once more, as creatures of light.

At the Bay.

At last the milk-white harbour catches the glitter and the gulls floating on the trembling water gleam like the shadows within a pearl.

The house-dog comes out of his kennel dragging the heavy chain and kalop-kalops at the water standing cold in the iron pan. The house cat emerges from nowhere and bounds on to the kitchen window sill waiting for her spill of warm morning milk.

Morning Children.

Children! children!

Oh no. Not yet. Oh, it can't be time. Go away. I won't. Oh, why must I?

Children! Children!

They are being called by the cold servant girls.

But they simply can't get up. They simply must have one more little sleep—the best sleep of all—the warm, soft, darling little rabbit of a sleep. . . . Just let me hug it one minute more before it bounds away.

Soft little girls rolled up in rounds, just their bunch of curls showing over the sheet top; little long pale boys stretching out their slender feet; other little boys lying on their bellies pressing their heads into the pillow; tiny little fellows with fresh cut hair sprouting from a tuft; little girls on their backs, their fists clenched, the bed-clothes anyhow, one foot dangling; girls with pig tails or rings of white paper snails instead of hair. . . . And now there is the sound of plunging water and all those youthful, warm bodies, the tender exposed boy children, and the firm compact little girls, lie down in the bath tubs and ruffle their shoulders scattering the bright drops as birds love to do with their wings. . . .

Squeech! Squeech! Tchee! Quee! Little boys with plastered hair, clean collars and brand new boots squeak from the nursery to the lobby to the cupboard under the stairs where the school kits are hung. Furious young voices cry: 'Who's *stolen* my ink eraser that was in the well of my pencil box?'

They hiss through their teeth at the stolid servant girls carrying the porridge pots: 'You've been at this! Thief! Spy!!'

December 27 When I stuck the small drawing to the side of the mirror frame I realised that the seal—the mark—the *cachet rouge*—had been set on the room. It had then become the room of those two, and not her room any more. It is not that the room was dead before, but now it has gained in life! Whence has come the tiny bouquet of tangerine fruits, the paste-pot on the writing-table, the fowl's feather stuck in Ribni's hair,[1] the horn spectacles on the Chinese embroidery. The 'order' in which I live is not changed, but enriched; in some strange way it is enlarged.

This is *en effet* just the effect of Jack's mind upon mine. Mysterious fitness of our relationship! And all those things which he does impose on my mind please me so deeply that they seem to be *natural* to me. It is all part of this feeling that he and I, different beyond the dream of difference, are yet an *organic whole*. We are, as I said yesterday, the two sides of the medal, separate, distinct and yet making one. I do not feel that I need another to fulfil my being, and yet having Jack, I possess something that without him I would lack. In fact we are—apart from everything else—each other's *critic* in that he 'sees' me, I see myself reflected as more than I appear and yet not more than I AM, and so I believe it is with him. So, to be together is apart from all else *an act of faith in ourselves*.

I went out into the garden just now. It is starry and mild. The leaves of the palm are like down-dropping feathers; the grass looks soft, unreal, like moss. The sea sounded, and a little bell was ringing, and one fancied—was it real, was it imaginary?—one heard a body of sound, one heard all the preparations for night within the houses. Some one brings in food from the dark, lamp-stained yard. The evening meal is prepared. The charcoal is broken, the dishes are clattered; there is a soft movement on the stairs and in the passages and doorways. In dusky rooms where the shutters are

[1]Ribni was Katherine's Japanese doll, so named after Captain Ribnikov, the Japanese spy who is the hero of Kuprin's story of that title.

closed the women, grave and quiet, turn down the beds and see that there is water in the water-jugs. Little children are sleeping. . . .

Does it always happen that while you look at the star you feel the other stars are dancing, flickering, changing places, almost playing a game on purpose to bewilder you? It is strange that there are times when I feel the stars are not at all *solemn*: they are secretly gay. I felt this to-night. I sat on the cane chair and leaned against the wall. I thought of Jack contained in the little house against which I leaned—within reach—within call. I remembered there was a time when this thought was a distraction. Oh, it might have been a sweet distraction—but there it was! It took away from my power to work. . . . I, as it were, made him my short story. But that belongs to the Past. . . . One has passed *beyond it*.

I thought also of the Princess. It's a bit bewildering—her unlikeness to the faces 'we' recognise or would recognise. She has a quick rapacious look—in fact she made me think of a *gull*, with an absolutely insatiable appetite for bread. And all her vitality, her cries, her movements, her wheelings, depend upon the person on the bridge who carries the loaf. This would of course *be hidden*. But this is what she is when she is really *she*, and not 'enchanted'.

Weak Tea.

. . . 'I have just partaken of that saddest of things—a cup of *weak* tea. Oh, why must it be weak! How much more than pathetic it is to hear someone say as she puts it down before you: 'I am afraid it is rather weak.' One feels such a brute to take advantage of it until it is a little stronger. I grasp the cup; it seems to quiver—to breathe—'coward!' I confess, I can never hear a person at a tea party say (in that timid whisper you know, as though they were shamefully conscious): '*Very* weak for me, please,' without wanting to burst into tears. Not that I like desperately strong tea—No, let it be a moderate strength—tea that rings the bell. Very strong tea does seem to give you your penny back—in the teapot from the taste of it.

Now and again Fred talked in his sleep. But even then you

could say he was quiet. . . . She would wake up and hear him say suddenly: 'it wants a couple of screws,' or 'try the other blade,' but never more than that.

The Rivers of China.

She sat on the end of the box ottoman buttoning her boots. Her short fine springy hair stood out round her head. She wore a little linen camisole and a pair of short frilled knickers.

'Curse these buttons,' she said, tugging at them. And then suddenly she sat up and dug the handle of the button hook into the box ottoman.

'Oh dear,' she said, 'I do wish I hadn't married. I wish I'd been an explorer.' And then she said dreamily, 'The Rivers of China, for instance.'

'But what do you know about the rivers of China, darling,' I said. For Mother knew no geography whatever; she knew less than a child of ten.

'Nothing,' she agreed. 'But I can *feel* the kind of hat I should wear.' She was silent a moment. Then she said, 'If Father hadn't died I should have travelled and then ten to one I shouldn't have married.' And she looked at me dreamily—looked through me, rather.

Snow-Mountains.

Have you noticed how very *smug* those mountains look that are covered with snow all the year round. They seem to expect me to be so full of admiring awe. It never seems to enter their silly tops to wonder whether it isn't rather dull to be so for ever and ever above suspicion.

Cultivated Minds.

Such a cultivated mind doesn't really attract me. I admire it, I appreciate all 'les soins et les peines' that have gone to produce it—but it leaves me cold. After all, the adventure is over. There is now nothing to do but to trim and to lop and to keep back—all faintly depressing labours. No, no, the mind I love must still have wild places, a tangled orchard where dark damsons drop in the heavy

grass, an overgrown little wood, the chance of a snake or two (real snakes), a pool that nobody's fathomed the depth of—and paths threaded with those little flowers planted by the wind. It must also have *real* hiding places, not artificial ones—not gazebos and mazes. And I have never yet met the cultivated wind that has not had its shrubbery. I loathe and detest shrubberies.

Let me remember when I write about that fiddle how it runs up lightly and swings down sorrowful; how it *searches*.

The Voyage of 'The Bugle'.

No, no, said Miss P., that really isn't fair. I love serious books. Why, I don't know when I've enjoyed a book as much as—as—Dear me! How silly! It's on the tip of my tongue—Darwin's . . . one moment—it's coming—Darwin's Decline and Fall. . . . No, no, that wasn't the one. That's not right now. Tchuh! Tchuh! you know how it is—I can see it quite plainly and yet . . . I've got it! Darwin's Descent of Man! . . . Was that the one—though? Do you know *now* I'm not certain? I feel it was, and yet it's unfamiliar. This is most extraordinary. And yet I enjoyed it so much. There was a ship. Ah! *that's* brought it back. Of course, of course! *That* was the one. Darwin's Voyage of the Bugle!

'La mère de Lao-Tse a conçu son fils rien qu'en regardant filer une étoile.'

The Little Cat.

'Here he used to sit and sometimes on the path below there sat a small white and yellow cat with a tiny flattened face. It sat very still and its little peaked shadow lay beside it. . . .

'This little cat never ran straight. It wound its way along the path, skirting the tufts of grass, crept now by the fence, now to the side of a rubbish-heap, and its little paws seemed to touch the ground as lightly as possible as though it were afraid of being followed,—*traced*.'

I shan't say it like that. It's only a note. But Ah, my darling, how often have I watched your small, silent progress! I shall not

forget you, my little cat, as you ran along your beat on this whirling earth.

When Jean-Paul was undressed, his breast was like a small cage of bent bamboos. And she hated to see it. 'Cover yourself!' And he shot his small arms into his woollen shirt.

1921

The New Year.

The last day of the old year was dull and cold. All day the light was weak and pale and smoky, like the light of a lamp when the oil is all but finished and the wick begins to burn. Everything looked shabby, even the trees—even the sky with its big grey patches. The church bells seemed never to stop ringing. The trams groaned, dragged past as if they expected every journey to be the last, and when there was no other sound, a little dog, tied up somewhere, began to yelp as young dogs do when they are frightened.

New Year. When she reached home the New Year was there already, pale, mysterious, gentle and so timid. It lay in the folds of the curtains, in the shadows of the stairs—it waited for her on the landing. She undressed quickly, making as little noise as possible and quickly she plaited her hair. But as she parted the sheets it seemed to her that a single hand—the hand of the New Year—drew them down too, and after she was in bed, that gentle hand helped to cover her.

The Question.

January Does one ever know? One never knows. She realised how foolish it would be to ask the question: 'What are you thinking of?' And yet if she did not ask the question she would never be certain that he was not thinking of . . . Even if she asked, how could she be certain he did not make up the answer.

An unposted letter.

Your letters sounded insincere to me; I did not believe them. People *don't* write such things; they only think they do, or they

read them in books. But real life is on quite another plane. If I were not ill, I still would have withdrawn from 'the world' because of my hatred of insincerity. It makes me dreadfully uncomfortable and unhappy. I could have answered your letter just in your vein and 'accepted' it, you knowing how I accepted it and I knowing that you knew—but it wouldn't have lasted. It would have been another *cul de sac* relationship. What good would that have been to either of us?

You see—to me—life and work are two things indivisible. It's only by being true to life that I can be true to art. And to be true to life is to be *good, sincere, simple, honest.* I think other people have given you a wrong idea of me, perhaps. I only like to love my friends. I have no time for anything less 'precious'. Friendship *is* an adventure; but do we agree about the meaning of the word 'adventure'? That's so important! That's where I feel we would quarrel. If you came on to *our* boat should we have understood one another?

You must not think I am 'prejudiced' or unfair. I am not. I still wish it were possible; but I cannot, and I won't pretend. Let us really and truly know where we are first. Let us be open with each other and not concealing anything.

Sunday, January 2 This afternoon is dreary, it is going dark, but I am waiting for somebody. Somebody will come in and not go again. He will stay to supper, sleep here and be here when I wake in the morning.

January 8 I would like to hear J. saying 'We'll have the north meadow mowed to-morrow', on a late evening in summer, when our shadows were like a pair of scissors, and we could just see the rabbits in the dark.

January 14 'To be happy with you seems such an impossibility. It requires a luckier Star than mine . . . The world is too brutal for me.' (Keats to Fanny Brawne: *August*, 1820.)

Keats's Letters to Fanny Brawne.

These letters written during his fatal illness are terrible to one in my situation. It is frightening that he too should have known this mental anguish. And to read his letter to Fanny on page 180 [i.e. that of July 5, 1820]—nay worse, that in which he says she has no *right* to that kind of happiness if she loves him . . . 'If you can smile in people's faces, and wish them to admire you *now* . . .' My God, does another soul on earth understand his torment as I do? That kind of thing—which she couldn't see was impossible . . . What would he have said and *felt* at B.'s letters? He would have felt what I felt. Let no man suffer so again! For mingled with all the known suffering is the anguish of despair because *one is ill.* How could anyone let such a thing happen to me at such a time? Or is it my 'fate' because I am ill? Do they treat me as posthumous already? Oh, the agony of life! How does one endure it? Oh, I have suffered too greatly. Nothing can take it away but one thing, and that I am—I feel in my soul—to be denied.

(*January*, 1921.)

January 30 J. accused me of always bagging his books as soon as he had begun to read them. I said: 'It's like fishing. I see you've got a bite. I want your line. I want to pull it in.'

[*February?*] Le travail, même mauvais, vaut mieux que la rêverie.

'But I can't see why you should mind, so much,' she said for the hundredth time. 'I can't see what it is you object to. It isn't as though people would notice you even. Goodness me! I'm always meeting them since . . . since . . .' She broke off. 'And it seems such a waste, too. There it is, standing in the hall, doing nothing. It seems so ungrateful, after it's been lent to you, not to give it a trial at least. Why don't you say something?'

She was pinning on her hat in front of the mirror in the sitting room. Her outdoor jacket and gloves lay across a chair. And when he still didn't answer her she made a little weary hopeless face at the mirror which meant: 'Oh dear, we're in one of our moods again!'

'If it's *me* you're thinking of by any chance,' she said quickly, snatching at the jacket——

Here is Marie with the supper. And I shall have to endure her jawing until it is over. But that is not important: what *is*, is that I have not written anything to-day worth a sou. I have passed the day in a kind of idleness. Why? Does it take so long to begin again? Is it my old weakness of will?

Sophie Bean.

What was there about that little house at the corner which made you feel sure a widow lived there? In the tiny sloping garden there grew candy-tuft, mignonette, pansies, Star of Bethlehem. A narrow asphalt path led to the door. But there was something about the windows—something quenched, expressionless. They had nothing to hide, nothing to reveal; and there was something about the bell that made you know when you rang it that the door would not be answered at once. There would be an interval of strange dead quiet, and then there would come a faint rustling.

Sophie Bean sat at the dining-room window in her black dress, hemming pillow-slips. She was pale, but in the dusky room a whiteness came from the pillow-slips, like the whiteness of snow, and made her paler. Her hands moved slowly—something depressed her—but it had to be done. Nevertheless she very often put it down and looked out of the window at the drooping trees, the heavy trams chuffing along, and the people who passed by, stooping and hurrying as though there was a secret reason why they should not be seen.

The Cat.

To-day, passing the kitchen, the door was open. Charles sat up to the table darning socks. And there sat beside the ball of wool a large black cat with an old bow round its neck. When he took up the scissors, the cat squeezed up its eyes as if to say 'That's quite right', and when he put the scissors down it just put out its paw as if to straighten them, but then it drew its paw back, deciding that it wasn't worth it.

Oh, I must not yield! I must, this evening, after my supper, get something done. It's not so terribly hard after all. And how shall I live my *good life* if I am content to pass even one day in idleness? It won't do. *Control*—of all kinds. How easy it is to lack control in little things! And once one does lack it, the small bad habits—tiny perhaps—spring up like weeds and choke one's will. That is what I find.

My temper is bad; my personal habits are not above reproach; I am ungracious—mentally untidy. I let things pass that I don't understand (unpardonable!) and I excuse myself, invent excuses for not working. Yet, is my desire to be idle greater than my desire to work? Is my love of *rêverie* greater than my love of action? Treacherous habit! Habit above all others evil and of long standing. I must give it up *at once* or lose my self-respect . . . It is only by making myself worthy of Jack that I shall be worthy of what I mean our relationship to be. He that faileth in little things shall not succeed in great things. Even my handwriting. From this moment *it* too must change. After supper I must start my Journal and keep it day by day. But *can* I be honest? If I lie, it's no use.

February 18 'They say philosophers and the truly wise are indifferent. It is false: indifference is the paralysis of the soul; it is premature death.' (Tchehov: *A Dreary Story*) Never were truer words spoken! K.M.

Amiel. 'La liberté interieure serait donc la plus tenace de mes passions, et peut-être ma seule passion.' Poor little beetle! What a give away!

'L'univers n'est que le caléidoscope qui tourne dans l'esprit de l'être dit pensant, lequel est lui-même une curiosité sans cause, un hasard qui a conscience de tout le grand hasard et qui s'en amuse pendant que le phenomène de sa vision dure encore.'

This is the kind of writing which leaves *our* generation *dead* cold.

March 9 'I chucked the thing behind the fireplace. It wasn't even clever.'

Mr. Harold Beauchamp on *Je ne parle pas francais.*

March 26 'A poem should not be something which the maker spins out of himself, but something external which he renders in verse as faithfully as possible. When Tennyson, for instance, wrote

A million emeralds break from the ruby-budded lime,

he did not make it at all. The lime-tree made it; he just saw it.' [From an anonymous review.] Hénorme!

The following five entries are scraps of Katherine's conversation recorded in my diary.

April 3 'Her face was like a marigold that insisted on keeping open too long.'

April 6 'She looked about as big as a cottage loaf in a pinafore.'

April 15 I said to Dr. Bouchage, when he wanted to examine my abdomen: 'Oh, Doctor . . . isn't there *anything* that I can keep to myself?' And he didn't even smile.

April 17 H. J. Massingham has got a bird in his bonnet.

April 19 Grin and Bear it: names for two comedians.

It is a curious fact that when a writer has attained to a certain eminence, we English cease to bother ourselves about him. There he is, recognised, accepted, labelled.

Faint the light shines in the little window; it is easily put out.

Snow.

It fell so softly, so gently, it seemed to him that even tenderly it fell. It floated through the air as if it were sorry for something, and wanted to reassure him, to comfort him. Forget! forget! all is blotted out, all is hidden—long ago, said the snow. Nothing can ever bring it back, nothing can ever torture you again. There is no trace left. All is as if it never had been. Your footsteps and hers are long since covered over. If you were to look for her, you never

would find her. If she were to come seeking you, it would be in vain. You have your wish, your wish! whispered the snow. You are safe, hidden, at peace—free.

At that moment, upon that word, a clock struck one loud single stroke. It was so loud, so mournful, like a despairing groan, that the feathery snowflakes seemed to shiver, to hesitate an instant, only to fall again faster than ever as though something had frightened them.

The Café.

The café was all but deserted. Over in the corner there sat a poor little creature with two loops of velvet in her hat that gave her the look of a rabbit. She was writing a letter. First she wrote a little, and then she looked up, and the two bows of ribbon seemed to pout, to listen. Then she crouched down again and scribbled another sheet. Again she looked up. The foxy waiter had his eye on her. . . .

In another corner sat a stout man with a swollen shabby black leather bag at his feet. He was yawning over a time-table, but occasionally he stopped and gave the black bag a little dig, a kick, as if to warn it that it was no good falling too fast asleep. They'd have to be off soon.

Aah! Baah! Aaah! Baah! like thousands of tired sheep in the shearing pens at evening-time.

And the gum-leaves, like tufts of cock's feathers ruffled in the faint breeze.

I took them just after you and Dent went. Do you think I dare take another dose? I feel as though I am suffocating.[1]

The Last Waiting Room.

One must write a story about a doctor's waiting-room. The glass doors with the sun from outside shining through; the autumn trees pale and fine; the cyclamen like wax. Now a cart shakes by.

[1] A question evidently addressed to me at a moment when Katherine dared not speak for fear of bringing on a fit of coughing.

Think of the strange places that illness carries one into; the strange people among whom one passes from hand to hand; the succession of black-coated gentlemen to whom she'd whispered 99, 44, 1-2-3. The servants she'd smiled at.

The last waiting-room. All before had been so cheerful.

'Then you don't think my case is hopeless?'

'The disease is of long standing, but certainly *not* hopeless.'

This one, however, leaned back and said:

'You really want to know?'

'Yes, of course. Oh, you can be quite frank with me.'

'Then, I DO.'

The carriage came and drove her away, her head buried in her collar.

The Doctor.

'I suppose, Doctor,' my patients are fond of saying,—for patients flatter their doctors, you know, just as much as doctors flatter their patients—'the reason why you look always so very stern in your car and never glance to the right or left is—that you know so many people. I mean if once you began to recognise anybody it would be—a—a kind of royal procession from door to door. Too dreadfully boring!'

I more than smile, I fling back my head, wrinkle my eyes and give my famous silent little laugh. Then I spring to my feet lightly, almost youthfully, incline towards the patient, take that confiding little hand in mine and say, as I press it reassuringly, 'But it needs the most dreadful discipline, you know . . . sometimes. Goodbye!' And I am gone before the patient has done thinking, 'Then he did see me that day—after all, I was right!'

But the patient is wrong, of course. Not that it is a matter of any importance. But what really happens is—I emerge from the hotel, château, villa—whatever it is. The grey car is drawn up to the pavement edge, and the figure of Giovanni leaps to attention on the instant. I cross rapidly, pause one moment, my foot on the step, and not looking at Giovanni, but looking over his shoulder, give him the next address and then leap in, light an Egyptian

cigarette, thrust my hands into my pockets, so as to be ready, at the first first movement, at the very first gliding motion of the car, to relax, to lean back, to give myself up, to let myself be carried, without a thought, or a feeling, or an emotion. . . .

But that star, that green star, that shines so brightly!

'How much the knowledge that one is alive for other people helps one to feel alive oneself.'

'That constant taking of leave which has haunted my secret thought.' (R. O. Prowse: *A Gift of the Dusk.*)

The Clinic Garden.

Carriages are not allowed to drive up to the doors of the clinique because of the noise. They stop at the big iron gate. Then comes a little walk—on the level, it is true, but still quite a walk before the yellow glass porch is reached. But there is a compensation, if only the patients would realize it. On either side of the gravel are flower-beds full of purple and pink stocks, wallflowers, forget-me-nots and creamy freezias with their spears of tender green like the green of young bamboos. The front of the clinique is hung with heliotrope, banksia roses and pink ivy geranium. And there is such a coming and going of brown bees and white butterflies, the air smells so sweet, there is such a sense of delicate trembling life that, however ill anyone might be, it was impossible surely not to be cheered and distracted. 'Look, look how lovely!' said the plain girl, pointing them out to her companion.

But the young man in a black double-breasted jacket put his hands to his ribs and breathed *a-huh-a-huh* as if he were playing trains.

'How pretty they are—how very pretty!' said the sentimental old mother, wagging her head at them and glancing at her daughter.

But the pale daughter stared back at her spitefully, very spitefully, and flung the end of her shawl over her shoulder.

Now a bath-chair is pushed along, carrying an old man. In his

stiff much-too-big overcoat, with his hat squeezed down to his ears, he looks marvellously like a Guy Fawkes.

The nurse stops the chair and says 'Flowers!' as one says 'Flowers!' to a baby. But there is no response at all; she bridles and wheels it on again. . . .

Stupéfaction totale. I feel unable to do anything. It is a proof of the horribly soporific nature of the codeine mixture.

A little book: *Knockings at the Door.* When she managed to blow the tissue-paper from the frontispiece, the author, with his hair parted down the middle, wearing a buttoned frock-coat and a turned-down collar, smiled at her almost too confidingly.

War and Peace.

' "Ho, ho, ho! ha ha! ha ha! Oh! oo!" the soldiers burst into a roar of such hearty, good-humoured laughter, in which the French line too could not keep from joining, that after it seemed as though they must unload their guns, blow up their ammunition, and all hurry away back to their homes. But the guns remained loaded, the port-holes in the houses and earth-works looked out as menacingly as ever, and the cannons, taken off their platforms, confronted one another as before.'

This is *great art*—this book. This is the real thing. It is a whole created world.

The Little Princess in labour.

'Inform the Prince that the labour has commenced,' said Marya, looking significantly at the messenger. Tihon went and gave the Prince that information.

'Very good', said the prince, closing the door behind him, and Tihon heard not the slightest sound in the study after that. After a short interval Tihon went to the study, as though to attend to the candles, seeing the prince lying on the couch, Tihon looked at him, looked at his perturbed face, went up to him humbly and kissed him on the shoulder, then went out without touching the candles or saying why he had come. *The most solemn mystery in the world was being accomplished.* Evening passed, night came on.

And the feeling of suspense and softening of the heart before the unfathomable did not wane, but grew more intense. No one slept.

Compare this beautiful gravity of feeling with our modern 'birth' scene. It's not what *I* am suffering—it's the 'mystery'.

The Thaw. 'It looked as though the sky were melting, and without the slightest wind sinking down upon the earth. The only movement in the air was the soft downward motion of microscopic drops of moisture or mist. The bare twigs in the garden were hung with transparent drops which dripped on to the freshly fallen leaves. *The earth in the kitchen garden had a gleaming, wet, black look like the centre of a poppy*, and at a short distance away it melted off into the damp, dim veil of fog.'

'Life is everything. Life is God. All is changing and moving, and that motion is God. And while there is life there is the joy of the consciousness of the Godhead. To love life is to love God. The hardest and the most blessed thing is to love this life in one's sufferings, in undeserved suffering.'

'A spiritual wound that comes from a rending of the spirit is like a physical wound, and after it has healed externally, and the torn edges are scarred over, yet, strange to say, like a deep physical injury it only heals inwardly by the force of life pushing up from within.'

That is true, master.

'And Pierre had won the Italian's passionate devotion simply by drawing out what was best in his soul and admiring it.'

That *is* love.

Pierre and Natasha. 'When on saying good-bye, he took her thin, delicate hand he unconsciously held it somewhat longer in his own.'

This is *just* what I understand, and so is this:—

'A joyful, unexpected frenzy, of which Pierre had believed himself incapable, seized upon him, The whole meaning of life, not for him only, but for all the world, seemed to him centred in his love and the possibility of her loving him.'

'She only talked because she needed to exercise her lungs and

her tongue. She cried like a child, because she needed the physical relief of tears, and so on. What for people in their full vigour is a motive, with her was obviously a pretext.'
Like Polonius.

Petya.

'"Ah, you want a knife?" he said to an officer, who was trying to tear off a piece of mutton. And he gave him his pocket-knife.

The officer praised the knife.

"*Please keep it, I have several like it,*" *said Petya, blushing.*'

'Perhaps, though, it's my own music. Come, again. Strike up my music. Come! . . .'
My music!

'I'm fond of sweet things. *They are capital raisins, take them all.*'

Petya's death. 'And again in the helpless struggle with reality, the mother, refusing to believe that she could live while her adored boy, just blossoming into life, was dead, took refuge from reality in the world of delirium. . . .'
All this is so true of Chummie . . . that . . .

'For him only that is important to which he, Tolstoi, has set his hand; all that occurs outside and beside him, for him has no existence. This is the great prerogative of great men. And sometimes it seems to me—perhaps it is only that I would have it seem so—as though there were in that prerogative a deep and hidden meaning.' (Leon Shestov.)

On May 4, 1921, Katherine left Mentone for Baugy in Switzerland, while I returned to England to give some lectures at Oxford. She moved to Sierre at the end of May where I rejoined her early in June. With some trepidation, for fear of the effect of the altitude on her heart, we went up to Montana, first to a sanatorium and then to the furnished Chalet des Sapins.

May 5 Genève: Salle d'attente. The snow lay like silver light on the tops of the mountains.

In the chill, greenish light, the wide motionless rivers looked

as though they were solid, and the pale furrowed earth, with white fruit-trees like coral branches, looked as if it were water.

Later. The station clock.

An unposted letter.

The *Tig Courier*, Sir, a weekly paper that pays you £950 a year for an article, personal as possible, the more intimate the better.

For three days the Editor has been waiting for your copy. To-night she got a postcard written in a train; but that was all. Will you tell her

(*a*) your reasons for withholding it (as subtle as you like) or

(*b*) when she may expect it.

Address: Tig, Stillin, Bedfordshire.

An unposted letter.

Dear B. I can't tell you how glad I am to hear you are dancing again—'albeit delicately', as you say.

Lo! how sweetly the Graces do it foot
To the instrument!
They dauncen deftly and singen sooth
In their merriment.

That means you are really better. Don't get ill again. Isn't it awful—being ill! I lie all day on my old balcony lapping up eggs and cream and butter with no one but a pet gold-finch to bear me tumpanēē. I must say the gold-finch is a great lamb. He's jet tame, and this morning after it had rained he came for his Huntley and Palmer crumb with a little twinkling rain-drop on his head. I never saw anyone look more silly and nice. Switzerland is full of birds, but they are mostly stodgy little German trots flown out of Appenrodt's catalogue. . . . But all Switzerland is on the side of the stodges. . . .

An unposted letter.

7.30 *a.m. Hotel Beau Site.* I keep walking and walking round this letter, treading on my toes and with my tail in the air; I don't

know where to settle. There's so much to say and the day is so fine. Well, here goes, darling.

The journey to Geneva took no time. My watchet seemed to be racing the train. We arrived some time after one, and I went and sat on a green velvet chair while L.M. saw to things. I suppose we had a long wait there; it did not seem long. Ever since early morning those mountains that I remembered from last time had been there—huge, glittering, with snow like silver light on their tops. It was absolutely windless, and though the air was cold, it was cold like spring. In fact (perhaps you realise I am putting a terrific curb on myself) it was delicious. Only to breathe was enough. Then we got into an omnibus train, and it waddled slowly round the lake, stopping at every tiny station. Germans were in the carriage; in fact, I was embedded in Germans, huge ones—Vater und die Mama und Hänse. Every time we saw a lilac-bush, they all cried *Schön!* This was very *old-world*. There was also a notice in the carriage to say that the company had thoughtfully provided a *cabinet*. This they read aloud—first, Vater, then die Mama and then little Hänse.

We arrived at Clarens just as the station clock (which was a cuckoo clock: that seems to me awfully touching, doesn't it to you?) struck seven, and a motor-car, like a coffee-mill, flew round and round the fields to Baugy. Oh dear, you realize I'm just telling you facts. The *embroidery* I'll have to leave for now. The hôtel is simply admirable so far. Too clean. Spick is not the word, nor is span. Even the sprays of white lilac in my room were fresh from the laundry. I have two rooms and a huge balcony. And so many mountains that I haven't even begun to climb them yet. They are superb. The views from the windows, Betsy love, over fields, little mushroom-like chalets, lake, trees, and then mountains, are overwhelming. So is the green velvet and flesh-pink satin suite in the salon, with copper jugs for ornaments and a picture on the wall called *Jugendidylle*. More of all this later.

I am posing here as a lady with a weak heart and lungs of Spanish leather. It seems to 'go down' for the present. Well, I had dinner in my room: consommé, fish with cream sauce, roast

turkey, new potatoes, braised laitue, and two little tiny babas smothered in cream. I had to send the turkey and trimmings away. Even then. . . .

Saint-Galmier is superseded by Montreux,[1] which the label says is saturated with carbonic acid gas. But my physiology book said this was deadly poison and we only breathed it out—never unless we were desperate, took it in. However, according to Doctors Ritter, Spingel, and Knechtli, it's marvellous for gravel and makes the urine sparkil like champagne. These are the Minor Mysteries. . . .

Sierre: The room with Seven Doors. Each door is different, and the seventh is a very tiny little door. It opens into a cupboard painted white, with an arched top, sky blue, sprinkled with stars.

The furniture, stern and dark.

Unposted Letters.

It's like this. It's no good my being here [at Sierre] any more. It's too hot and the food has gone off. Also, I must tackle my affair seriously, you know. So I am going to Montana. Stephani says that he would far rather I went to him for a month at least so that he could keep my heart under his eye—or ear. Good. I agree. But there's my Bogey. Will he go to a pension five minutes away for a month and visit me? As soon as I find out how the place suits me we can get a little châlet. I send you a p.c. of your pension, Stephani's place is not a real live-or-dead sanatorium. He, of course, thinks you would like to be with me there. Why not? It is quite usual. But I say *No* to that, and I'm sure you agree. You'd hate it. So would I.

Look here, my love and my dear,

I'm not really up to chalets yet. This is what would be BEST of all. Do you agree? We go to Montana. I go to Stephani's for a month at least. You have a room at this Pension du Lac. Stephani can then keep his eye and his ear on me, and I can lie absolutely

[1]Saint-Galmier and Montreux are both mineral waters.

low for that month. *Then*, in the meantime, we have looked round and we take a chalet. Does that seem possible to you?

May 19

'Lone women like to empty houses perish.'
(Marlowe: *Hero and Leander.*)

'Far from the town (where all is *whist* and still,
Save that the sea playing on yellow sand,
Sends forth a *ratling* murmur to the land)
My turret stands.'
(Marlowe: *Hero and Leander.*)

Lovely!

June 6 [See under August 19, 1920]

June 8 For the first time since the war I talked German to a German. 'Wollen Sie fragen ob man warten kann?' And so on. It was simply extraordinary. Why?

Oh, Bogey, I can't help laughing at the hymns and prayers at your lecture. Did *you* sing? I feel you were (I'd almost swear to it) specially mentioned in a prayer. Did you kneel down? And all those rubber *tikis* showed on your shoes? *Signes cabalistiques*. I often used to think what a horror they would have given Robinson Crusoe. Oh, *dear* me! Did you have a hymn-book of your own, or half the parson's.[1]

The Vagabond.

'The woman from upstairs has just been down to put her milk-can out. She was furious when she found me in the hall. She simply rounded on me; there's no other word for it. Told me I ought to be ashamed of myself for waiting up for him, that it served me right if he came in later and later, that she'd be ashamed, at my age, not to know better. Little spitfire! I'm still trembling! And what right has she to say anything at all? She has none. She

[1]I had given Katherine an account of a lecture at which, to my surprise and embarrassment, prayers were offered and hymns sung. The rubber *tikis* refer to the bold designs on the rubber soles of my shoes

can't understand. She's a hard little thing! The very way she shut the door on the milk-can just now showed she had no feeling for anyone else.

It's a long time now since he started going out every evening. I can't stop him. I've tried everything, but it is useless. Out he goes. And the horrible thing is I don't know where it is he goes to and who is he with? It's all such a mystery. That's what makes it so hard to bear. Where have you been? I've asked him and asked him that. But never a word, never a sign. I sometimes think he likes to torture me.

But then I've got nobody else. I suppose that sounds strange. But I can say as truly as a girl in love: "He is all the world to me".'

Autobiography.[1]

My literary career began with short-story writing in New Zealand. I was nine years old when my first attempt was published. I have been filling notebooks ever since. After I came to London I worked for some time for *The New Age*, and published *In A German Pension* in 1912. It was a bad book, but the press was kind to it. Later, I worked with my present husband, Mr. John Middleton Murry, editor of *The Athenæum*, but at that time editor of *Rhythm* and *The Blue Review*. In the past two years I have reviewed novels for *The Athenæum*, and I have written more short stories. Such a prolonged exercise ought to have produced something a great deal better than *Bliss;* I hope the book on which I am now engaged will be more worthy of the interest of the public. It is a collection of stories—one with a New Zealand setting in the style of 'Prelude'. Several are character sketches of women rather like poor Miss Ada Moss in the story 'Pictures.'

Station Climatérique.

'One tries still to fancy that one is here by some chance of travel, to flavour the experience with some lingering taste of adventure. One tries to fancy one is a little different from the others. *They*

[1]Written, I think, in answer to a request from a literary magazine, but probably neither sent nor published.

belong to the place; they are part of it; they are an essential part of the intense impression it conveys; they could not really belong anywhere else! But oneself. . . .' (R. O. Prowse: *A Gift of the Dusk*.)

The following is a fragment of K. M.'s conversation when, on reaching Montana, she dared not talk for fear of bringing on an attack of coughing, but wrote what she had to say in her note-book. The first part refers to the taking of the Chalet des Sapins.

Mrs. M. knows Ernestine well. She was there while her servant was away for holiday. Excellent! Clean, reliable, and *very* kindly. But not what you'd call a good cook. However, most willing and anxious.

About coal and wood. 150 francs—and she suggests *30* francs for the 30 lbs of jam!

But that I said I'd pay when I had found from L.M. just how much jam was there. She was not sure.

Masses of wood there.

In November there is 6 foot of snow!!

Elizabeth is fearfully keen on your work. She reads it all. Never has known anyone develop so. It seems to her each week somehow *freer*.

She says: 'Do you think he likes me? I am a dog-like nature, and can't live if people don't whistle to me and give me a strictly spiritual little pat occasionally.'

Of Mrs. M. 'Her talk is so bad, Katherine. She has such a big remnant basket and I don't like remnants.'

Of Ida. 'What a joy it must be to get rid of a perfect friend! That's what is so very difficult.'

The Problem.

'Do you think that marriage would be of any use to me?'

His friend considered gravely. He frowned, knocked his pipe against his heel, and thrust out his underlip. 'It depends,' said he, 'very much on the woman.'

'Oh, but of course,' said Archie eagerly.

'Granted the right woman,' said Rupert largely, 'I can imagine it might immensely benefit you.'

The problem is two friends, and a woman enters. One marries.[1]

July *Montana.* One thing I am determined upon. And that is *to leave no sign.* There was a time—it is not so long ago—when I should have written *all* that has happened since I left France. But now I deliberately choose to tell no living soul. I keep silence as Mother kept silence. And though there are moments when the old habit 'tempts' me and I may even get so far as to write a page, they are only moments, and each day they are easier to conquer.

Chalet des Sapins, Montana. Just as now I say scarcely a word about my treacherous heart. If it's going to stop, it is going to stop, and there's an end of it. But I have been in this little house for nearly two days now, and it has not *once* quietened down. What dread to live in! But what 's the use of saying aught? No, my soul, be quiet. . . .

July 10 And now, just as I felt a little better and less worried about my HEAD and my heart, the gland has become inflamed and all the surrounding tissue, too. It looks as though an abscess were forming. So here is another *scare.* And with it, I've one of my queer attacks when I feel nauseated all the time and can't bear light or noise or heat or cold. Shall I get through this, too? It is not easy still to find the courage to cope with these onslaughts. . . .

July 13 Went to the Palace, and had the gland punctured. It is very unlikely that they will save the skin. I am sure, from the feeling, that they won't, and that this affair is only beginning. I shall be back at the Palace before the week is out. In the meantime I am exhausted and can't write a *stroke.*

Well, I must confess I have had an idle day. God knows why. All was to be written, but I just didn't write it. I thought I could, but I felt tired after tea and rested instead. Is it good or bad in me

[1]This is, I think, the first 'idea' of the unfinished story *Honesty,* of which fragments have been published in *The Doves' Nest.*

to behave so? I have a sense of guilt, but at the same time I know that to rest is the very best thing I can do. And for some reason there is a kind of booming in my head—which is horrid. But marks of earthly degradation still pursue me. I am not crystal clear. Above all else I do still lack application. It's not right. There is so much to do, and I do so little. Life would be almost perfect here if only when I was *pretending* to work I always was working. But that is surely not too hard. Look at the stories that wait and wait just at the threshold. Why don't I let them in? And their place would be taken by others who are lurking beyond just out there—waiting for the chance.

Next Day. Yet take this morning, for instance. I don't want to write anything. It's grey; it's heavy and dull. And short stories seem unreal and not worth doing. I don't want to write; I want to *live*. What does she mean by that? It's not easy to say. But there you are!

Queer, this habit of mine of being garrulous. And I don't mean that any eye but mine should read this. This is—*really private*. And I must say—nothing affords me the same relief. What happens as a rule is, if I go on long enough, I *break through*. Yes, it's rather like tossing very large flat stones into the stream. The question is, though, how long this will prove efficacious. Up till now, I own, it never has failed me. . . .

One's sense of the importance of small events is very *juste* here. They are not important at all. . . . ! ? Strange! I suddenly found myself outside the library in Wœrishofen: spring—lilac—*rain*—books in black bindings.

And yet I love this quiet clouded day. A bell sounds from afar; the birds sing one after another as if they called across the tree-tops. I love this settled stillness, and this feeling that, at any moment, down may come the rain. Where the sky is not grey, it is silvery white, streaked with little clouds. The only disagreeable feature of the day is the flies. They are really maddening, and there is nothing really to be done for them: I feel that about hardly anything.

The Barmaid.

She had an immense amount of fuzzy hair piled up on top of her head, and several very large rings, which from their bright flashing look, you felt certain were engagement-rings.

Above all cooking smells I hate that of mutton chops. It is somehow such an ill-bred smell. It reminds me of commercial travellers and second-class, N.Z.

I'll stand in front of the house and knock, and when the door is opened, run in past the maid and call for whoever is there.

Should you say wasted? No, not really. Something is gathered. This quiet time brings one nearer.

July I finished *Mr. and Mrs. Dove* yesterday. I am not altogether pleased with it. It's a little bit made up. It's not inevitable. I mean to imply that those two may not be happy together—that that is the kind of reason for which a young girl marries. But have I done so? I don't think so. Besides, it's not *strong* enough. I want to be nearer—far, far nearer than that. I want to use all my force even when I am taking a fine line. And I have a sneaking notion that I have, at the end, used the Doves *unwarrantably*. *Tu sais ce que je veux dire*. I used them to round off something—didn't I? Is that quite my game? No, it's not. It's not quite the kind of truth I'm after. Now for *Susannah*. All must be *deeply felt*.

But what is one to do, with this wretched cat and mouse act? There's my difficulty! I must try to write this afternoon instead. There is no reason why I shouldn't! No reason, except the after-effects of pain on a weakened organism.

July 18 The noise in this house this morning is sheer hell. It has gone on steadily since shortly after six o'clock, and for some reason the maid seems to have completely lost her head. It's now nearly ten, and she hasn't cleared the breakfast away. I have to go again to the Palace at 11, and the consequence is I'm rather nervous anyway. And I've had the flowers to do and various things to see to like—laundry. I can hardly bear it. Now she plods up. Bang!

She will be at the door in a moment. I don't know how to stand it if it goes on. She's here. She's about to put the things in the lift What are her thoughts? I don't know or care. But I bitterly long for a little private room where I can work undisturbed. The balcony is not good enough; neither is this *salon*. Here again, J. has beaten me. And it's not half so important for him. . . .

July 23 Finished *An Ideal Family* yesterday. It seems to me better than *The Doves,* but still it's not good enough. I worked at it hard enough, God knows, and yet I didn't get the deepest truth out of the idea, even once. What *is* this feeling? I feel again that this kind of knowledge is too easy for me; it's even a kind of trickery. I know so much more. This looks and smells like a story, but I wouldn't buy it. I don't want to possess it—to live with it. NO. Once I have written two more, I shall tackle something different—a long story: *At the Bay, with more difficult relationships. That's the whole problem.*

'Out of the pocket of the mackintosh she took an ample bag, which she opened and peered into and shook. Her eyebrows were raised, her lips pressed together. . . .'

'And a very long shining blue-black hairpin gleaming on the faded carpet. . . .'[1]

'She shuddered. And now when she looked at his photograph, even the white flower in his buttonhole looked as though it were made of a curl of mutton-fat. . . .'

'And she saw Mr. Bailey in a blue apron standing at the back of one of those horrible shops. He had one hand on his hip, the other grasped the handle of a long knife that was stuck into a huge chopping block. At the back of him there hung a fringe of small rabbits, their feet tied together, a dark clot of blood trembling from their noses. . . .'

A Welcome.

And because, when you arrive unexpected, there is so often a cold gleam in the hussif's eye which means: 'I can manage the

[1]See p.266.

sheets perfectly, but the blankets are certainly going to be a problem,' I would have you met in the doorway by a young creature carrying a not too bright lamp, it being, of course, late evening, and chanting, as you brush under the jasmine porch:

Be not afraid, the house is full of blankets,
Red ones and white ones, lovely beyond dreaming,
Key-pattern, tasselled, camel-hair and woolly,
Softer than sleep or the bosom of a swan.

July 24 [See under August 19, 1920.]

The following was written in the middle of the manuscript of Her First Ball.

July 25 All this! All that I write—all that I am—is on the border of the sea. It's a kind of playing. I want to put *all* my force behind it, but somehow, I *cannot!*

Ful gay was al the ground, and queynt,
And poudred as men had it peynt
With many a fresh and sondry flour
That casten up ful good savour.

From an unposted letter.

It's a chill, strange day. I can just get about. I decided this morning to write to S—— about the Swiss Spahlinger treatment: whether it would be suitable for me, etc. And I shall wire you to-morrow, asking you to go and see S——. Say what you like. But let him know that I am practically a hopeless invalid. I have tried to explain about money to him; why I haven't paid him, and I have promised to pay the first moment I can. . . .

'Mistress, I dug upon your grave
To bury a bone, in case
I should be hungry near this spot
When passing on my daily trot.
I am sorry, but I quite forgot
It was your resting place.'

(Thomas Hardy)

Wing would do this.

August 'I have been writing a story about an old man.'

She looked vague. 'But I don't think I like old men—do you?' said she. 'They *exude* so.'

This horrified me. It seemed so infernally petty, and more than that . . . it was the saying of a vulgar little mind.

Later I think it was shyness.

August 11 I don't know how I may write this next story.[1] It's so difficult. But I suppose I shall. The trouble is I am so infernally cold.

An unposted letter.

I would have written a card before, but I have been—am—ill, and to-day's the first day I've taken a pen even so far. I've had an attack of what the doctor calls acute enteritis. I think it was poisoning. Very high fever and sickness and dysentery and so on. *Horrible*. I decided yesterday to go to the Palace, but to-day makes me feel I'll try and see it out here. J. is awfully kind in the menial offices of nurse, and I've not been able to take any food except warm milk. So Ernestine can't work her worst on me. She seems, poor creature, to be much more stupid than ever! Burns everything! Leaves us without eggs, and went off for her afternoon yesterday without a word. We didn't even know she was gone.

Love.

A sudden idea of the relationship between 'lovers'.

We are neither male nor female. We are a compound of both. I choose the male who will develop and expand the male in me; he chooses me to expand the female in him. Being made 'whole'. Yes, but that's a process. By love serve ye one another. . . . And why I choose *one* man for this rather than many is for safety. We bind ourselves within a ring and that ring is as it were a wall against the outside world. It is our refuge, our shelter. Here the tricks of life will not be played. Here is *safety* for us to *grow*.

Why, I talk like a child!

[1] *The Voyage*. The finished MS. is dated August 14, 1921.

August 29 'If I could only sweep all my garden up the hill, to your doors!' Her perfect little gesture as she said this.

The Candlestick. An imaginary letter.

Many thanks for your stuffy letter. As for the candlestick, dear, if you remember, I gave it you on your last birthday. No wonder it reminded you of me. I have kept it in its paper and intend to return it to you with a pretty little note on your next. Or shall I first send it to you as an early Christmas present and do you return it as a late one or a New Year's gift? Easter we shall leave out. It would be a trifle excessive at Easter. I wonder which of us will be in possession of it at the last. If it is on my side, I shall leave it you in my will, all proper, and I think it would be nice of you, Camilla, to desire that it should be buried with you. Besides, one's mind faints at the idea of a candlestick whirling through space and time for ever—a *fliegende* candlestick, in fact!

I have been suffering from wind round the heart. Such a tiresome complaint, but not dangerous. Really, for anything to be so painful I think I would prefer a spice of danger added. The first act was brought on by a fit of laughing.

September September is different from all other months. It is more magical. I feel the strange chemical change in the earth which produces mushrooms is the cause, too, of this extra 'life' in the air—a resilience, a sparkle. For days the weather has been the same. One wakes to see the trees outside bathed in green-gold light. It's fresh—not cold. It's clear. The sky is a light pure blue. During the morning the sun gets hot. There is a haze over the mountains. Occasionally a squirrel appears, runs up the mast of a pine-tree, seizes a cone and sits in the crook of a branch, holding it like a banana. Now and again a little bird, hanging upside-down, pecks at the seed. There is a constant sound of bells from the valley. It keeps on all day, from early to late.

Midday—with long shadows. Hot and still. And yet there's always that taste of a berry rather than scent of a flower in the air.

But what can one say of the afternoons? Of the evening? The rose, the gold on the mountains, the quick mounting shadows? But it's soon cold. Beautifully cold, however.

August 'Do you want to go home, want to go home, want to go home?' said she. Why she asked it so many times nobody will ever know.

The first year their mother had a flat in London for the season Betty and Susannah met more people who were not relations in a fortnight than they had seen in the whole of their lives. Not that they were very old. Betty wore stockings in the winter, bathed herself and used a small knife to cut up her own meat, but Susannah was still small enough to sit on knees, to believe everything people said and to drink out of her christening mug.

'The smell of thyme shattered the silence as the scream of a hawk' . . .

'The hot smell between her teeth . . . as she lay there damp and shivering!'[1]

It is impossible to 'take in' all these views and changes of light. The innocent girl who barely knew the word 'obscene' could not think in this fashion: 'Was it merely as a potentiality that he obsessed her thoughts?'

Emily Plack.

The *panting* of the saw.

'I was in the first stage of consumption, and was suffering from something else, possibly even more serious than consumption. . . . I was, day by day, more possessed by a passionate, irritating longing for ordinary everyday life. I yearned for mental tranquillity, health, fresh air, good food. *I was becoming a dreamer*, and like a dreamer, I did not know exactly what I wanted.' (Tchehov: *An Anonymous Story*.)

[1]Apparently, quotations from a novel Katherine was reading with distaste.

Silence. Little children run in and out of this world, never knowing the danger; and sick persons feel it slowly building up about them, trying to thrust its way into the place of the other. That is why they have such a horror of being alone . . . anything to break the silence; and lonely people, rather than face it, walk the streets, gape at shows, drink.

September

The following occurs in the middle of an unfinished MS. called 'By Moonlight'. 'Karori' was the 'novel' of which Prelude *and* At the Bay *were—at one time—to have formed parts.*

I am stuck beyond words, and again it seems to me that what I am doing has *no form!* I ought to finish my book of *stories first* and then, when it's gone, really get down to my novel, *Karori*.

Why I should be so passionately determined to disguise this, I don't quite know. But here I lie, pretending, as Heaven knows how often I have before, to write. Supposing I were to give up the pretence and really did try? Supposing I only wrote half a page in a day—it would be half a page to the good; and I should at least be training my mind to get into the habit of regular performance. As it is, every day sees me further off my goal. *And,* once I had this book finished, I'm free to start the real one. *And* it's a question of money.

But my idea, even of the short story, has changed rather, lately —That was lucky! Jack opened the door softly and I was apparently really truly engaged. . . . And—no, enough of this. It has served its purpose. It has put me on the right lines.

At the end of the same unfinished MS. is this note.

This isn't bad, but at the same time it's not good. It's too easy. . . . I wish I could go back to N.Z. for a year. But I can't possibly just now. I don't see why not, in two years' time though.

September It's nothing short of loathsome to be in my state. Two weeks ago I could write anything. I went at my work each day and at the end of each day so much was written. Whereas *now* I can't say a word!

Why did she put his chair in the window always? Sun or no sun, she stuck him in the window as if he had been a canary!

' "That's how it is, old girl. . . . Kuzma Ionitch is gone . . . He said goodbye to me . . . He went and died for no reason . . . Now, suppose you had a little colt, and you were own mother to that little colt . . . And all at once that same little colt went and died . . . You'd be sorry, wouldn't you?'

The little mare munches, listens, and breathes on her master's hands. Iona is carried away and tells her all about it.' (Tchehov: *Misery*.)

I would see every single French short story up the chimney for this. It's one of the masterpieces of the world.

N.Z. *Honesty:* The Doctor and his wife, Arnold Cullen, Lydia, and Archie.

L. *One Kiss:* Arnold Alexander and his friend in the train. *Wet lilac.*

N.Z. *Six Years After:* The wife and husband on the steamer. The cold buttons.

N.Z. *Aunt Anne:* Her life with the Tannhäuser overture.

L. *Lives like Logs of Driftwood.*

N.Z. *A Weak Heart:* Edie and Ronnie.

L. *Widowed:* Geraldine and Jimmie.

N.Z. *Our Maude:* 'What a girl you are!'

N.Z. *The Washerwoman's Children.*

The above is evidently the first form of the list of stories to be written dated October 27. L. means that the setting is London; N.Z. that it is New Zealand.

One Kiss.

And the friend opposite gazed at him thinking what an attractive mysterious fellow he was. And the rain sped on. . . .

Flashy and mean. . . .

It was spouting with rain. Yet there was that feeling of spring in the air which makes everything bearable . . .

The big sprays of flowers . . .

He shot out his legs, flung up his arms, stretched, then sat up with a jerk and felt in his pocket for the yellow packet of cigarettes. As he felt for them a weak strange little smile played on his lips. His friend opposite was watching it. He knew it. Suddenly he raised his head; he looked his friend full in the eyes.

'That was a queer thing to happen,' he said softly and meaningly.

'What?' asked the friend, curious.

Alexander kept him waiting for the answer. Practised liar that he was, the . . .

The above are obviously notes for the story. On another page, a beginning is made with the writing.

It happened that Alexander and his friend missed the Sunday morning train that all the company travelled by. The only other for them to catch so as to be at their destination in time for the rehearsal on Monday morning was one that left London at midnight. The devil of a time! And the devil of a train, too. It stopped at every station. 'Must have been carrying the London milk into the country,' said Alexander bitterly. And his friend who thought that there was no one like him said, 'That's good, that is. Extremely good! You could get a laugh for that on the halls, I should say.'

They spent the evening with their landlady in her kitchen. She was fond of Alexander; she thought him quite the gentleman.[1]

The Skerritt Girl.

On her way back to the garden Susannah sat down on the hall chair for a minute to take a pebble out of her shoe. And she heard her mother say: 'No, I can't possibly do that. I can't possibly turn that dear good Mr. Taylor out of the house simply to make room for this Skerritt girl.'

It was a little difficult to explain the facts of the case to the Reverend Mr. Taylor, and Mrs. Downing hated having to do so. It seemed so unreasonable to ask him to turn out of the spare-room for the night for an unknown girl, when he was their

[1]In *The Doves' Nest*, p. 174, will be found two entirely new beginnings of this story.

regular guest, as it were, for the whole Synod, and so appreciative —poor lonely up-country man—of the spare-room double-bed. But there was nothing else to be done. In that extraordinary way men have, Harry, Mrs. Downing's husband, had rung up from the office to tell her that a Netta Skerritt had called on him that morning as she was passing through Wellington on her way to Nelson, and though neither of the Downings had even seen her before, simply because her father and Harry Downing had known each other in the old days, Harry had immediately asked her to stay the night with them.

At that moment Susannah herself came in from the garden. She leaned her elbow on the round walnut table, crossed her legs, and cupped her burning cheeks in her hands.

'And you really won't mind Susannah's bed for the night, Mr. Taylor?' said Mrs. Downing anxiously, pouring him out a second cup of tea.

'Not at all, Mrs. Downing. I shall be as happy as a king,' said good cheerful Mr. Taylor.

But Susannah's eyes opened very wide. Her lips parted, she stared first at her mother, and then at Mr. Taylor's black coat, gleaming collar, and big yellow hands.

'Is Mr. Taylor going to sleep in my bed, Mother?' said she, astounded.

'Yes, dear, but only for to-night,' said her mother absently, folding a piece of bread-and-butter. Mr. Taylor smiled his broad smile.

Susannah imagined him lying in her bed, his head tilted back, snoring like he snored on Sunday afternoons. How awful!

'With *me?*' she asked, horrified.

Mother flushed faintly, and Mr. Taylor gave a loud snort that might have been laughter.

'Don't be such a silly little girl, Susannah. Of course not. You are going to sleep in the spare room with Miss Skerritt.'

This was more mysterious still. Oh dear, why were grown-ups like this? She had only run in for a piece of bread-and-butter; she wanted to get back to the garden. And here they were sitting in

this dark room. It looked very dark, and the white cups shone on the walnut table like lilies in a lake, after the bright outside.

A moment later and there was nothing left of Netta Skerritt but a dint in the pillow and one long—much too long—blue-black hairpin gleaming on the pale carpet.

An unposted letter.

October 13 Dear *Friend*. I like your criticism. It is right you should have hated those things in me. For I was careless and false. I was not *true* in those days. But I have been trying for a long time now to 'squeeze the slave out of my soul.'. . . I just want to let you know.

Oh, Koteliansky, I am in the middle of a nice story [*The Garden Party*]. I wish you would like it. I am writing it in this exercise book, and just broke off for a minute to write to you.

Thank you for the address. I can't go to Paris before the spring, so I think it would be better if I did not write until then. I feel this light treatment is the right one. Not that I am ill at present. I am not in the least an invalid, in any way.

Ir's a sunny, windy day—beautiful. There is a soft roaring in the trees and little birds fly up into the air just for the fun of being tossed about.

Good-bye. I press you hand. Do you dislike the idea we should write to each other from time to time? KATHERINE

At the end of the manuscript of The Garden Party *which was finished on October* 14.

This is a moderately successful story, and that's all. It's somehow, in the episode at the lane, scamped.

The New Baby

It is late night, very dark, very still. Not a star to be seen. And now it has come on to rain. What happiness it is to listen to rain at night; joyful relief, ease; a lapping-round and hushing and brooding tenderness, all are mingled together in the sound of the

fast-falling rain. God, looking down upon the rainy earth, sees how faint are these lights shining in little windows—how easily put out. . . .

Suddenly, quick hard steps mount the stone staircase. Someone is hurrying. There is a knock at my door, and at the same moment a red beaming face is thrust in, as Ernestine announces, 'He is born.'

Born!

'He is born!'

Oh, Ernestine, don't turn away. Don't be afraid. Let me weep too.

You ought to keep this, my girl, just as a *warning* to show what an arch-wallower you *can* be.

October 16 Another radiant day. J. is typing my last story, *The Garden Party*, which I finished on my birthday. It took me nearly a month to 'recover' from *At the Bay*. I made at least three false starts. But I could not get away from the sound of the sea, and Beryl fanning her hair at the window. These things would not *die down*. But now I am not at all sure about that story. It seems to me it's a little 'wispy'—not what it might have been. The *G.P.* is better. But that is not *good enough*, either. . . .

The last few days what one notices more than anything is the blue. Blue sky, blue mountains, all is a heavenly blueness! And clouds of all kinds—wings, soft white clouds, almost hard little golden islands, great mock-mountains. The gold deepens on the slopes. In fact, in sober fact, it is perfection.

But the late evening is the time—of times. Then with that unearthly beauty before one it is not hard to realise how far one has to go. To write something that will be worthy of that rising moon, that pale light. To be 'simple' enough, as one would be simple before God. . . .

October 27 Stories for my new book.

N.Z. *Honesty:* The Doctor, Arnold Cullen and his wife Lydia, and Archie the friend.

L. *Second Violin:* Alexander and his friend in the train. Spring—spouting rain. *Wet lilac.*

N.Z. *Six Years After:* A wife and husband on board a steamer. The cold buttons. They see someone who reminds them.

L. *Lives like Logs of Driftwood:* This wants to be a long, very well-written story. The men are important, especially the lesser man. It wants a good deal of working . . . newspaper office.

N.Z. *A Weak Heart:* Ronnie on his bike in the evening, with his hands in his pockets, *doing marvels,* by that dark tree at the corner of May Street. Edie and Ronnie.

L. *Widowed:* Geraldine and Jimmie: a house overlooking Sloane Street and Square. Wearing those buds at her breast. 'Married or not married. . . .' From Autumn to Spring.

N.Z. *Our Maude:* Husband and wife play duets and a *one* a *two* a *three* a one a *two three one!* His white waistcoats. Wifeling and Mahub! What a girl you are!

N.Z. *At Karori:* 'The little lamp. I seen it.' And then they were silent. (*Finito:* October 30, 1921.)

Fragments of five of these stories are printed in the original edition of The Doves' Nest and Other Stories. *Only one of them was finished, namely* The Doll's House. *It is notable that this appears, added apparently as an afterthought, in the previous list as* The Washerwoman's Children, *and in this list as* At Karori: *with the words which actually end the story. Three days later this little masterpiece was finished. The original MS shows that it was written in great haste, yet apparently not consecutively. This suggests that K.M.'s inspirations were more sudden and unexpected than she herself always realized, and that generally if she planned her stories, she was unable to finish them. Anyhow, the fact is remarkable that of nearly all her completed stories, nothing but the stories themselves remain. Of these there are, as a rule, no notes, no alternative drafts, no 'false starts', but only an original manuscript written at ever-increasing speed so that the writing towards the end is hardly more than a hieroglyph. In some cases there is a fair copy, with singularly little alteration. The note on* The Doll's House *is no exception to this rule, for it is the actual conclusion of the*

story. This account of her methods is confirmed by her note on January 17, 1922: '*It's always a kind of race to get in as much as one can before it* disappears.' *The conclusion seems to be that she 'saw'* The Doll's House *just as she was finishing her list above, and finished the story before the vision disappeared.*

October I wonder why it should be so difficult to be humble. I do not think I am a good writer; I realize my faults better than anyone else could realize them. I know exactly where I fail. And yet, when I have finished a story and before I have begun another, I catch myself *preening* my feathers. It is disheartening. There seems to be some bad old pride in my heart; a root of it that puts out a thick shoot on the slightest provocation. . . . This interferes very much with work. One can't be calm, clear, good as one must be, while it goes on. I look at the mountains, I try to pray and I think of something *clever*. It's a kind of excitement within one, which shouldn't be there. Calm yourself. Clear yourself. And anything that I write in this mood will be no good; it will be full of *sediment*. If I were well, I would go off by myself somewhere and sit under a tree. One must learn, one must practise, to *forget* oneself. I can't tell the truth about Aunt Anne unless I am free to enter into her life without selfconsciousness. Oh God! I am divided still. I am bad. I fail in my personal life. I lapse into impatience, temper, vanity, and so I fail as thy priest. Perhaps poetry will help.

I have just thoroughly cleaned and attended to my fountain pen. If after this it leaks, then it is *no* gentleman!

October The deep grudge that L.M. has for me really is fascinating. She keeps it under for a long time at a stretch, but oh! —how it is there! To-night, for instance, in the salon we hated each other—really hated in a queer way. I felt I wanted her out of my sight; she felt that she must insult me before she went. It was very queer. It was peculiarly horrible. When she said, 'I hope you are satisfied,' I had a real shrinking from her—something I

never feel at other times. What is it? I don't understand, either, why her carelessness and recklessness should be so repellent to me. When she tosses her head and says in a strange voice, at ease, 'Oh, a lot I care!' I want to be rid of the very sight.

November 11 I wish that *my* silence were only a two minute one!

November 13 It is time I started a new journal. Come, my unseen, my unknown, let us talk together. Yes, for the last two weeks I have written scarcely anything. I have been idle; I have *failed*. Why? Many reasons. There has been a kind of confusion in my consciousness. It has seemed as though there was no time to write. The mornings, if they are sunny, are taken up with sun-treatment; the post eats away the afternoon. And at night I am tired.

'But it all goes deeper.' Yes, you are right. I haven't been able to yield to the kind of contemplation that is necessary. I have not felt pure in heart, not humble, not good. There's been a stirring-up of sediment. I look at the mountains and I see nothing but mountains. Be frank! I read rubbish. I give way about writing letters. I mean I refuse to meet my obligations, and this of course weakens me in every way. Then I have broken my promise to review the books for *The Nation*. Another *bad spot*. Out of hand? Yes, that describes it—dissipated, vague, not *positive*, and above all, above everything, not working as I should be working—wasting time.

Wasting time. The old cry—the first and last cry—Why do ye tarry? Ah, why indeed? My deepest desire is to be a writer, to have 'a body of work' done. And there the work is, there the stories wait for me, *grow tired*, wilt, fade, because I will not come. And I hear and I *acknowledge* them, and still I go on sitting at the window, playing with the ball of wool. What is to be done?

I must make another effort—at once. I must begin all over again. I must try and write simply, fully, freely, from my heart. *Quietly*, caring nothing for success or failure, but just going on.

I must keep this book so that I have a record of what I do each week. (Here a word. As I re-read *At the Bay* in proof, it seemed to me flat, dull, and not a success at all. I was very much ashamed of it. I am.) But now to resolve! And especially to keep in touch with Life—with the sky and this moon, these stars, these cold, candid peaks.

November 16 To go to Sierre, if it goes on like this . . . or to—or to—

November 21 Since then [*i.e.* since writing the entry of October 16, 1921] I have only written *The Doll's House*. A bad spell has been on me. I have begun two stories,[1] but then I told them and they felt betrayed. It is absolutely fatal to give way to this temptation. . . . To-day I began to write, seriously, *The Weak Heart*,—a story which fascinates me *deeply*. What I feel it needs so peculiarly is a very subtle variation of 'tense' from the present to the past and back again—and softness, lightness, and the feeling that all is in bud, with a play of humour over the character of Ronnie. And the feeling of the Thorndon Baths, the wet, moist, oozy . . . no, I know how it must be done.

May I be found worthy to do it! Lord, make me crystal clear for thy light to shine through!

November 24 These last days I have been awfully rebellious. Longing for something. I feel uprooted. I want things that Jack can so easily do without, that aren't natural to him. I long for them. But then, stronger than all these desires, is the other, which is to *make good* before I do anything else. The sooner the books are written, the sooner I shall be well, the sooner my wishes will be in sight of fulfilment. That is sober truth, of course. As a pure matter of fact I consider this enforced confinement here as God-given. But, on the other hand, I must make the most of it quickly. It is not unlimited any more than anything else is. Oh, why—oh, why isn't anything unlimited? Why am I haunted every single

[1]These two stories were *Widowed* and *Second Violin*.

day of my life by the nearness of death and its inevitability? I am really diseased on that point! And I can't speak of it. If I tell J. it makes him unhappy. If I don't tell him, it leaves me to fight it. I am tired of the battle. No one knows how tired.

To-night, when the evening-star shone through the side-window and the pale mountains were so lovely, I sat there thinking of death. Of all there was to do—of Life, which is so lovely—and of the fact that my body is a prison. But this state of mind is *evil*. It is only by acknowledging that I, being what I am, had to suffer *this* in order to do the work I am here to perform—it is only by acknowledging it, by being thankful that work was not taken away from me, that I shall recover. I am weak where I must be strong.

And to-day—Saturday [November 26]—less than ever. But no matter. I have progressed . . . a little. I have realised *what* it is to be done—the strange barrier to be crossed from thinking it to writing it. . . . Daphne.

[On the next page begins the unfinished MS of *Daphne*, included in *The Doves' Nest*.]

Vaihinger: *Die Philosophie des Als Ob*. How comes it about that with curiously false ideas we yet reach conclusions that are in harmony with Nature and appeal to us as Truth?

It is by means of, and not in spite of, these logically defective conceptions that we obtain logically valuable results. The fiction of *Force:* when two processes tend to follow each other, to call the property of the first to be followed by the other its 'force', and to measure that 'force' by the magnitude of the result (*e.g.* force of character). In reality we have only succession and co-existence, and the 'force' is something we imagine.

Dogma: absolute and unquestionable truth.

Hypothesis: possible truth (Darwin's doctrine of descent).

Fiction: is impossible but enables us to reach what is relatively truth.

The myths of Plato have passed through these three stages, and passed back again, i.e. they are now regarded as fiction.

Why must thinking and existing be ever on two different planes? Why will the attempt of Hegel to transform subjective processes into objective world-processes not work out? 'It is the special art and object of thinking to attain existence by quite other methods than that of existence itself.' That is to say, reality cannot become the ideal, the dream; and it is not the business of the artist to grind an axe, to try to impose his vision of life upon the existing world. Art is not an attempt of the artist to reconcile existence with his vision; it is an attempt to create his own world *in* this world. That which suggests the subject to the artist is the *unlike-ness* to what we accept as reality. We single out—we bring into the light—we put up higher.

All's Well that Ends Well.

The First Lord is worth attending to. One would have thought that his speeches and those of the Second Lord would have been interchangeable; but he is a very definite, quick-cut character. Take, for example, the talk between the two in Act IV Scene III. The Second Lord asks him to let what he is going to tell dwell darkly with him.

First Lord: 'When you have spoken it, 'tis dead, and I am the grave of it.'

And then his comment:

'How mightily sometimes we make us comforts of our losses.'

And this is most excellent:

'The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together; our virtues would be proud if our faults whipped them not; and our faults would despair if they were not cherished by our virtues.'

I like the temper of that extremely—and does it not reveal the man? Disillusioned and yet—amused—worldly, and yet he has feeling. But I see him as—quick, full of life, and marvellously at his ease with his company, his surroundings, his own condition, and the whole small, solid earth. He is like a man on shipboard who is inclined to straddle just to show (but not to *show off*) how well his sea-legs serve him. . . .

The Clown—'a shrewd knave and an unhappy'—comes to tell the Countess of the arrival of Bertram and his soldiers.

'Faith, there's a dozen of 'em, with delicate fine hats, and most courteous feathers, that bow and nod the head at every man.'

In that phrase there is all the charm of soldiers on prancing, jingling, dancing horses. It is a veritable little pageant. With what an air the haughty (and intolerable) Bertram wears his two-pile velvet patch—with what disdain his hand in the white laced French glove tightens upon the tight rein of his silver charger. Wonderfully sunny, with a little breeze. And the Clown, of course, sees the humour of this conceit. . . .

Parolles is a lovable creature, a brave little cock-sparrow of a ruffian.

. . . 'I am now sir, muddied in Fortune's mood, and smell somewhat strong of her strong displeasure.'

I must say Helena is a terrifying female. Her virtue, her persistence, her pegging away after the odious Bertram (and disguised as a pilgrim—so typical!) and then telling the whole story to that *good* widow-woman! And that tame fish Diana. As to lying in Diana's bed and enjoying the embraces meant for Diana—well, I know nothing more sickening. It would take a respectable woman to do such a thing. The worst of it is I can so well imagine . . . for instance acting in precisely that way, and giving Diana a present afterwards. *What* a cup of tea the widow and D. must have enjoyed while it was taking place, or did D. at the last moment want to cry off the bargain? But to forgive such a woman! Yet Bertram would. There's an espèce de mothers-boyisme in him which makes him stupid enough for anything.

The Old King is a queer old card—he seems to have a mania for bestowing husbands. As if the one fiasco were not enough, Diana has no sooner explained herself than he begins:

'If thou be'st yet a fresh uncropped flower
Choose thou thy husband, and I'll pay thy dower.'

I think Shakespeare must have seen the humour of that. It just—at the very last moment of the play, puts breath into the old fool.

Hamlet.

Coleridge on Hamlet. 'He plays that subtle trick of pretending to act only when he is very near being what he acts.'

. . . So do we all begin by acting and the nearer we are to what we would be the more perfect our *disguise*. Finally there comes the moment when *we are no longer acting;* it may even catch us by surprise. We may look in amazement at our no longer borrowed plumage. The two have merged; that which we put on has joined that which was; acting has become action. The soul has accepted this livery for its own after a time of trying on and approving.

To act . . . to see ourselves in the part—to make a larger gesture than would be ours in life—to declaim, to pronounce, to even exaggerate. To persuade ourselves? Or others? To put ourselves in heart? To do more than is necessary in order that we may accomplish ce qu'il faut.

And then Hamlet is lonely. The solitary person always acts.

But I could write a thousand pages about Hamlets.

Mad Scene. If one looks at it with a cold eye is really very poor. It depends entirely for its effect upon wispy Ophelia. The cardboard King and Queen are of course only lookers-on. They don't care a halfpenny. I think the Queen is privately rather surprised at a verse or two of her songs. . . . And who can believe that a solitary violet withered when that silly fussy old pomposity died? And who can believe that Ophelia really loved him, and wasn't thankful to think how peaceful breakfast would be without his preaching?

The Queen's speech after Ophelia's death is exasperating to one's sense of poetic truth. If no one saw it happen—if she wasn't found until she was drowned, how does the Queen know how it happened? Dear Shakespeare has been to the Royal Academy . . . for his picture.

Miranda and Juliet.

To say that Juliet and Miranda might very well be one seems to me to show a lamentable want of perception. Innocent, early-morning-of-the world Miranda, that fair island still half dreaming

in a golden haze—lapped about with little joyful hurrying waves of love. . . . And small, frail Juliet, leaning upon the dark—a flower that is turned to the moon and closes, reluctant, at chill dawn. It is not even her Spring. It is her time for dreaming: too soon for love. There is a Spring that comes before the real Spring and so there is a love—a false Love. It is incarnate in Juliet.

Romeo and Juliet.

When the old nurse cackles of leaning against the dove-house wall it's just as though a beam of sunlight struck through the curtains and discovered her sitting there in the warmth with the tiny staggerer. One positively feels the warmth of the sunny wall. . . .

Twelfth Night.

Malvolio's 'or . . . play with some rich jewel.' There speaks the envious servant-heart that covets his master's possessions. I see him stroking the cloth with a sigh as he puts away his master's coat—holding up to the light or to his fingers the jewel before he snaps it into its ivory case. I see the servant copying the master's expression as he looks in the master's mirror.

And that . . . 'having risen from a day bed where I have left Olivia sleeping.' Oh, doesn't that reveal the thoughts of all those strange creatures who attend upon the lives of others!

Antony and Cleopatra.

Act I. Scene 1.

'The triple pillars of the world . . .'

'The wide arch of the ranged empire . . .'

'To-night we'll wander through the streets and note The qualities of people.' (That is so *true* a pleasure of lovers.)

Act I. Scene 2.

'A Roman thought hath struck him . . .'

'Ah, then we bring forth weeds
When our quick minds lie still . . .'

Enobarbus constantly amazes me, *e.g.* his first speeches with Antony about Cleopatra's celerity in dying.

'Your old smock brings forth a new petticoat.'

Act I. Scene 3. Like Scene 2. (1) 'Saw you my lord?' (2) 'Where is he?' 'What says the *married* woman?' There's jealousy! And then her fury that he's not more upset at Fulvia's death! 'Now I know how you'll behave when I die!'

These are beautiful lines of Antony's:

'Our separation so abides and flies
That thou, residing here, goes yet with me,
And I, hence fleeing, here remain with thee.'

Act I. Scene 4.

'Like to a vagabond flag upon the stream
Goes to and back, lackeying the varying tide,
To rot itself with motion.'

Marvellous words! I can apply them. There is a short story. And then it seems that the weed gets caught up and then sinks; then it is gone out to sea and lost. But comes a day, a like tide, a like occasion, and it reappears more sickeningly rotten still! Shall he? Will he? Are there any letters? No letters? The post? Does he miss me? No. Then sweep it all out to sea. Clear the water for ever! Let me write this one day.

'Thy cheek so much as lanked not.' The economy of utterance.

Act I. Scene 5.

'Now I feed myself with most delicious poison.'

'An arm-gaunt steed?' Oh, yes; of course.

Act II. Scene 1.

'*Salt* Cleopatra . . .'

Act II. Scene 2.

Enobarb: 'Every time serves for the matter that is born in it.'

Caesar: 'You praise yourself by laying defects of judgment to me, but you patch'd up your excuses.'

Enobarb. 'That truth should be silent; I had almost forgot.'

Act III. The short scene between Antony and the Soothsayer is very remarkable. It explains the tone of Caesar's remarks to Antony. . . . And Antony's concluding speech shows his uneasiness at the truth of it. He'll go to Egypt. He'll go where his weakness is praised for strength. There's a hankering after Egypt between the lines.

Scene 5. '*Tawny*-finned fishes . . . their *shiny* jaws. . . .' and the adjectives seem part of the nouns when Shakespeare uses them. They grace them so beautifully, attend and adorn so modestly, and yet with such skill. It so often happens with lesser writers that we are more conscious of the servants than we are of the masters, and quite forget that their office is to serve, to enlarge, to amplify the power of the master.

> 'Ram thou thy fruitful tidings in my ears
> That long time have been barren.'

Good lines! And another example of the choice of the place of words. I suppose it was instinctive. But 'fruitful' seems to be just where it ought to be, to be resolved (musically speaking) by the word 'barren'. One reads 'fruitful' expecting 'barren' almost from the 'sound-sense.'

> *Cleo.* 'Thou should'st come like a Fury crown'd with snakes
> Not like a normal man.'
>
> ' "But yet" is as a jailor to bring forth
> Some monstrous malefactor.'

There's matter indeed! Does not that give the pause that always follows those hateful words. 'But yet'—and one waits. And both look towards the slowly opening door. What is coming out? And sometimes there's a sigh of relief after. Well, it was nothing so very awful. The gaol-mouse, so to speak, comes mousing through and cleans his face with his paw.

'I am pale, Charmian.'

Reminds me of Mary Shelley. 'Byron had never seen any one so pale as I.' Something of John's too. I can't remember what. 'Was he as pale as she? He must have been for he felt the blood creeping back into his cheeks.' I don't know whether Bogey *wrote* creeping, or whether that's caricature. It makes me smile. It's *so* like him.

'Since I myself
Have given myself the cause.'

What does that mean exactly? That she sent Antony away? or let Antony go?

'In praising Antony I have dispraised Caesar . . .
I am paid for it now.'

A creature like Cleopatra always expects to be paid for things.

1922

January 1 I dreamed I sailed to Egypt with Grandma—a very white boat.

Cold, still. The gale last night has blown nearly all the snow off the trees; only big, frozen-looking lumps remain. In the wood where the snow is thick, bars of sunlight lay like pale fire.

I have left undone those things which I ought to have done and I have done those things which I ought not to have done, *e.g.* violent impatience with L.M.

Wrote *The Doves' Nest* this afternoon. I was in no mood to write; it seemed impossible. Yet when I had finished three pages, they were 'all right'. This is a proof (never to be too often proved) that once one has thought out a story nothing remains but the *labour*.

Wing Lee disappeared for the day. Read W.J.D.'s poems. I feel very near to him in mind.

I want to remember how the light fades from a room—and one fades with it, is *expunged*, sitting still, knees together, hands in pockets. . . .

January 2 Little round birds in the fir-tree at the side window, scouring the tree for food. I crumbled a piece of bread, but though the crumbs fell in the branches only two found them. There was a strange remoteness in the air, the scene, the winter cheeping. In the evening, for the first time for —— I felt rested. I sat up in bed and discovered I was singing within. Even the sound of the wind is different. It is joyful, not ominous. And black dark looks in at the window and is only black dark. In the afternoon it came on to pour with rain, long-glancing rain, falling aslant.

I have not done the work I should have done. I shirk the lunch party [see *The Doves' Nest*]. This is very bad. In fact I am disgusted with myself. There must be a change from now on. What I chiefly admire in Jane Austen is that what she promises, she performs, *i.e.* if Sir T. is to arrive, we have his arrival at length, and it's excellent and excels our expectations. This is rare; it is also my very weakest point. Easy to see why. . . .

January 3 I dreamed I was at the Strand Palace,—W.L.G. having married M.D.—big, blonde—in quantities of white satin. . . .

There was a great deal more snow this morning; it was very soft, 'like wool.' The cocoanut was bought and sawn in half and hung from J.'s balcony. The milk came tinkling out of the nut in brightest drops—not white milk. This was a profound surprise. The flesh of the nut is very lovely—so pure white. But it was that dewy, sweet liquid which made the marvel. Whence came it? It took one to the island.

I read *The Tempest*. The papers came. I over-read them. Tell the truth. I did no work. In fact I was more idle and hateful than ever. Full of sin. Why? 'Oh self, oh self, wake from thy common sleep.' And the worst of it is I feel so much better in health. It is shameful! *The Tempest* seems to me astonishing this time. When one reads the same play again, it never is the same play.

January 4 Dreamed of Michael Sadleir. An important dream; its tone was important. That gallery over the sea and my 'Isn't it

beautiful?' and his weary 'No doubt'. His definition of the two kinds of women. . . .

A.M. which served as an excuse not to do any creative work. But I was not so wicked to-day. I have read a good deal of *Cosmic Anatomy* and understood it far better. Yes, such a book does fascinate me. Why does Jack hate it so?

To get even a glimpse of the relations of things—to follow that relation and find it remains true through the ages enlarges my little mind as nothing else does. It's only a greater view of psychology. It helps me with my writing, for instance, to know that hot + bun may mean Taurus, Pradhana, substance. No, that's not really what absorbs me; it's that reactions to certain causes and effects always have been the same. It wasn't for nothing Constantia[1] chose the moon and water, for instance!

Read Shakespeare. The snow is thicker, it clings to the branches like white new-born puppies.

January 5 A long typical boat dream. I was, as usual, going to N.Z. But for the first time my stepmother was *very* friendly—so nice. I loved her. A tragic dream as regards Ida. She disappeared, and it was too late to find her or tell her to come back *at last*.

Read *Cosmic Anatomy*. I managed to work a little. Broke through. This is a great relief. Jack and I put out food for the birds. When I went to the window all the food was gone, but there was the tiny print of the feet on the sill. J. brought up the half cocoanut and sprinkled crumbs as well. Very soon, terrified, however, one came, then another, then a third, balanced on the cocoanut. They are precious little atoms.

It still snows. I think I *hate* snow, downright hate it. There is something stupefying in it, a kind of 'You must be worse before you're better,' and down it spins. I love, I long for the fertile earth. How I have longed for the South of France this year! So do I now.

Soundly rated Ida about food and clothing. She has a food 'complex'. J. and I read *Mansfield Park* with great enjoyment. I wonder if J. is as content as he appears? It seems too good to be true.

[1]One of the sisters in *The Daughters of the late Colonel*.

January 6 The first quarter of the Moon. *Jour de fête.* The [Christmas] Tree is dismantled.

I had a very bad night and did not fall deeply asleep enough to dream.

In the morning, all white, all dim and cold, and snow still falling. While waiting in my room I watched the terrific efforts of a little bird to peck through the ice and get at the sweet food of the nut. He succeeded. But why must he so strive?

My heart is always bad to-day. It is the cold. It feels congested, and I am uneasy, or rather my body is. Vile feeling. I cough.

Read Shakespeare, read *Cosmic Anatomy*, read The Oxford Dictionary. Wrote. But nothing like enough.

In the afternoon W—— came to tea. I suspect he is timid, fearful and deeply kind. Deep within that vast substance lurks the *seed.* That is not sentimental. He wished me sun as he left. I felt his wish had power and was a blessing. One can't be mistaken in such things. He *is* in his stockings—pea-green and red! J. came up after ski-ing, excessively handsome—a glorious object, no less. I never saw a more *splendid* figure.

I am wearing my ring on my middle finger as a reminder not to be so base. We shall see. . . . No letters. Picture of Anna Wong. It asked for a story.

January 7 It ceased snowing, and a deep, almost gentian blue sky showed. The snow lay heaped on the trees, big blobs of snow, like whipped cream. It was very cold, but, I suppose, beautiful. I cannot see this snow as anything but hateful. So it is.

My birds have made a number of little attacks on the cocoanut, but it is still frozen. I read *Cosmic Anatomy*, Shakespeare and the Bible. Jonah. Very nice about the gourd, and also on his journey, 'paying the fare thereof.'

I wrote at my story, but did not finish the lunch party as I ought to have done. How *very* bad this is! Had a long talk with Ida and suddenly saw her again as a figure in a story. She resolves into so many. I could write *books* about her alone!

I dreamed a long dream. Chummie was young again, so was

Jeanne. Mother was alive. We were going through many strange rooms—up in lifts, alighting in lounges. It was all vaguely foreign.

The Little Frog.

'Presently in the scale of complexity we find a higher power in charge which coordinates the activity of a mass of cells, moving one and stopping another for 'reasons' beyond the cognizance of the individual cells. A very extraordinary demonstration of such higher control can be made in the case of the frog. If part of the brain of a frog be removed he goes on living, but has become an automaton. Placed on a level board he sits there until he dries up. But if the board is gradually lifted, so that his position becomes unstable, he walks up the board and at length sits on the end, climbing down the other side if the lifting is continued beyond the vertical.' (*Cosmic Anatomy.*)

Poor little frog! He breaks my heart.

January 8 All night dreamed of visiting houses, bare rooms, No. 39, going up and down in lifts, etc.

Heavily, more heavily than ever, falls the snow. It is hypnotising. One looks, wonders vaguely how much has fallen and how much will fall and—looks again. Bandaged Jack's fingers. The *Mercury* came with *At the Bay*. I am *very* unsatisfied.

In the afternoon J. and I played cribbage, with nuts for counters. I recalled the fact that I used to play so often with such intense—Heavens with what feelings!—In the drawing-room at Carlton Hill while Tommy played the piano.[1] But it meant absolutely *nothing*. J. giving me a bad nut and me paying him the bad nut again was all that really mattered.

After tea we knitted and talked and then read. We were idle—snow-bound. One feels there is nothing to be done while this goes on.

Had a letter from *The Sketch* asking for work. I must obey. J. and I talked Paris yesterday and he quite understood. This is a proof that one must *be calm and explain* and be TRUE. Remember that!

[1]i.e. in the winter of 1908. 'Tommy' is Arnold Trowell.

January 9 Snow. The vegetable garden fence was all but gone H—— came and said there was between 6 and 7 feet of snow. He was very cheerful and friendly. Off his guard, speaking of Miss S. he declared, 'Well, the fact is she is not normal. And anyone who is not normal I call *mad*. She is unconventional, that is to say, and people like that are no good to anyone except themselves.' When he said 'mad', a look came into his eyes—a flash of *power*—and he swung the stethoscope, then picked up my fan and rattled it open.

Read and knitted and played cards. A long letter from Sydney [Schiff]. I want to believe all he says about my story. He *does* see what I meant. He does not see it as a set of trivial happenings just thrown together. This is enough to be deeply grateful for—more than others will see. But I have this continual longing to write something with all my power, all my force in it.

January 10 Dreamed I was back in New Zealand.

Got up to-day. It was fine. The sun shone and melted the last trace of snow from the trees. All the morning big drops fell from the trees, from the roof. The drops were not like rain-drops, but bigger, softer, more *exquisite*. They made one realise how one loves the fertile earth and hates this snow-bound cold substitute.

The men worked outside on the snowy road, trying to raise the telegraph pole. Before they began they had lunch out of a paper, sitting astride the pole. It is very beautiful to see people sharing food. Cutting bread and passing the loaf, especially cutting bread in that age-old way with a clasp-knife. Afterwards one got up in a tree and sat among the branches working from there, while the other lifted. The one in the tree turned into a kind of bird, as all people do in trees—chuckled, laughed out, peered from among the branches, careless. *At-tend! Ar-rêt! Al-lez!*

January 11 In bed again. Heard from Pinker *The Dial* has taken *The Doll's House*. Wrote and finished *A Cup of Tea*. It took about 4-5 hours. In the afternoon Elizabeth came. She looked fascinating in her black suit, something between a Bishop and a

Fly. She spoke of my 'pretty little story' in the *Mercury*. All the while she was here I was conscious of a falsity. We said things we meant; we were sincere, but at the back there was nothing but falsity. It was very horrible. I do not want ever to see her or hear from her again. When she said she would not come often, I wanted to cry *Finito!* No, she is not my friend.

There is no feeling to be compared with the joy of having written and finished a story. I did not go to sleep, but nothing mattered. There it was, *new* and complete.

Dreamed last night of a voyage to America.

January 12 A vile cold day. The parcel came from Elizabeth. But when one compares it with A.'s exquisite coat. . . .

J. and I 'typed'. I hate dictating; but the story still seems to me to be good. Is it?

All the whole time at the back of my mind slumbers not nor sleeps the idea of Paris, and I begin to plan what I will do *when*—— Can it be true? What shall I do to express my thanks? I want to adopt a Russian baby, call him Anton, and bring him up as mine, with Kot for a godfather and Mme. Tchehov for a godmother. Such is my dream.

I don't feel so sinful this day as I did, because I have written something and the tide is still high. The ancient landmarks are covered. Ah! but to write better! Let me write better, more deeply, more *largely*.

Baleful icicles hang in a fringe outside our window panes.

January 13 Full moon. Heard from Mimi. Her letter was almost frightening. It brought back the inexplicable past. It flashed into my mind too that she must have a large number of letters of mine which don't bear thinking about. In some way I fear her. I feared her at Chancery Lane. There was a peculiar recklessness in her manner and in her tones which made me feel she would recognise no barriers at all. At the same time, of course, one is *fascinated*.

Wrote to Koteliansky. Began a new story, but it went too slowly. M. typed for me. I am again held up by letters to write.

Letters are the real *curse* of my existence. I hate to write them: I have to. If I don't, there they are like great guilty gates barring my way.

H. came and suggested my heart condition was caused by the failure to expand the diaphragm. Then why, in that case, not learn to expand it?

January 14 I got up to-day and felt better. It was intensely cold.

Elizabeth came in the afternoon. She and I were alone. She wore a little blue hood fastened under the chin with a diamond clasp. She looked like a very ancient drawing. She suggested that if I did become cured, I might no longer write. . . .

Dreamed last night I was in a ship, with the most superb, unearthly (in the heavenly sense) seas breaking. Deep, almost violet blue waves with high foamy crests, and this white foam bore down on the blue in long curls. It was a marvellous sight. The dream was about Chummie. He had married a girl without permission and Father and Mother were in despair. I 'realised' it was to be; what had happened—if he had not died.

Wingley made a dash at the bird window to-day.

January 15 Dreamed I was shopping, buying underclothes in Cook's and then in Warnock's.[1] But the dream ended *horribly*.

Another chill, bloodless day. I got up, but all was difficult. In the afternoon J. went to the chalet and came back in the evening with a letter for me from Elizabeth; so generous, so sweet a letter that I am ashamed of what I said or thought the other day.

I have worked to-day, but in discomfort—not half enough. I could have written a whole story. Saw for the first time an exquisite little crested bird. Its call is a trill, a shake, marvellously delightful. It was very shy, though, and never had the courage to stop and eat. Saw people in sleighs and on luges. Snow is very *blue*. The icicles at dawn this morning were the colour of opals—blue lit with fire. E. lent us *Will Shakespeare*. Really awful stuff!

☐ I had better keep this for a sign.

[1]These are or were shops in Wellington, N.Z.

January 16 A wonderfully pleasant dream about Paris. All went so well. The Doctor and his friends all had the same atmosphere. It was good, kind, quietly happy. I don't know when I've had a dream more delightful.

But the day has not been delightful. On the contrary. It snowed heavily, it was bitter cold, and my congestion worse than ever. I have been in pain and discomfort all day. My functions won't work normally either. My lung creaks. I have done no work. After tea I simply went to sleep out of sheer inertia. I am in a slough of despond to-day, and like everybody in such an ugly place, I am ugly, I feel ugly. It is the triumph of matter over spirit. This must not be. Tomorrow at all costs (here I swear) I shall write a story. This is my first resolution *pour une date fixée* in this journal. I dare not break it. H. M. Tomlinson's letter to M. came yesterday. It was a beautiful letter and not to be forgotten. But why am I so *bad?*

January 17 Tchehov made a mistake in thinking that if he had had more time he would have written more fully, described the rain, and the midwife and the doctor having tea. The truth is one can get only *so much* into a story; there is always a sacrifice. One has to leave out what one knows and longs to use. Why? I haven't any idea, but there it is. It's always a kind of race to get in as much as one can before it *disappears*.

But time is not really in it. Yet wait. I do not understand even now. I am pursued by time myself. The only occasion when I ever felt at leisure was while writing *The Daughters of the Late Colonel*. And then at the end I was so terribly unhappy that I wrote as fast as possible for fear of dying before the story was sent. I should like to prove this, to work at *real leisure*. Only thus can it be done.

January 18 H. is a man to remember. At tea that day. Mrs. M. before the huge silver kettle and pots and large plates. The *ornate* cake; one must remember that cake. 'It seems such a pity to cut it,' and the way the old hand, so calmly, grasped the knife. H.

leaning back, slapping two pieces of bread and butter together. 'More tea, Tim?' 'No, thanks. Yes. Half a cup.' Pouring from the kettle to the tea-cup, the fat finger on the knob. 'And how is he?' 'Bleeding like a pig!' 'Oh, dear'—gathering her lace scarf into her lap—'I'm sorry to hear that.'

H. always collects something—always will. China, silver, 'any old thing that comes along'. He's musical and collects fiddles. His feeling for his children is so *tender* that it's pain. He can't understand it.

One must remember, too, his extraordinary insecurity. The world rocks under him, and it's only when he has that stethoscope that he can lay down the law. *Then* lay it down he does. 'What I say is: she's mad. She's not normal. And a person who isn't normal I call *mad—barmy*.' And you hear pride in his voice; you hear the unspoken: 'I am a plain man, you know. . . .'

I imagine there is a vein of tremendous cynicism in him, too. He feels sometimes that all is ashes. He likes to go to church, to take part, to sing when others sing, to kneel, to intone the responses. This puts his heart at rest. But when it is over and he is at home and there is a smell of beef, there comes this restlessness. When he was little, I imagine he pulled the wings off flies. And I still see suicide as his end, in a kind of melancholia, and 'nobody wants me', and 'damned if I won't'.

January 20 Last quarter of the moon. Wrote to W.J.D. Why it should be such an effort to write to the people one loves I cannot imagine. It's none at all to write to those who don't really count. But for weeks I have thought of de la Mare, wanted to, longed to write to him, but something held back my pen. What? Once started, really started, all goes easily. . . . I told him in this letter how much I thought of him. I suppose it is the effect of isolation that I can truly say I think of de la Mare, Tchehov, Koteliansky, Tomlinson and Orage, every day. They are part of my life.

I have got more or less used to pain at last. I wonder sometimes if this is worse or better than that has been; but I don't expect to be without. But I have a suspicion like a certainty that the real cause

of my illness is not my lungs at all, but something else. And if this were found and cured, all the rest would heal.

January 21 Grandma's birthday. Where is that photograph of my dear love leaning against her husband's shoulder, with her hair parted so meekly and her eyes raised? I love it. I long to have it. For one thing Mother gave it to me at a time when she loved me. But for another—so much more important—it is *she*, my own Grandma, young and lovely. That arm. That baby sleeve with the velvet ribbon. I must see them again.

And one day I must write about Grandma at length, especially of her beauty in her bath—when she was about sixty. Wiping herself with the towel. I remember now how lovely she seemed to me. And her fine linen, her throat, her scent. I have never *really* described her yet. Patience! The time will come.

January 22 My feeling about Ernestine is shameful. But there it is. Her tread, her look, the way her nose is screwed round, her intense stupidity, her wrists—revolt me. This is *bad*. For she feels it, I am sure she does. When we speak together she blushes in a way that doesn't seem to me natural. I feel that her self-respect is shamed by my thoughts.

Lumbago. This is a very queer thing. So sudden, so painful. I must remember it when I write about an old man. The start to get up—the pause—the slow look of fury—and how, lying at night, one seems to get *locked*. To move is an agony; till finally one discovers a movement which is possible. But that helpless feeling about with the legs first!

January 23 Paris? To remember the sound of wind—the peculiar wretchedness one can feel while the wind blows. Then the warm soft wind of spring searching out the heart. The wind I call the Ancient of Days which blows here at night. The wind that shakes the garden at night when one runs out into it.

Dust. Turning one's back on a high, tearing wind. Walking along the Esplanade when the wind carries the sea over. The wind of summer, so playful, that rocked and swung in the trees here. And wind moving through grass so that the grass quivers. This

moves me with an emotion I don't ever understand. I always see a field, a young horse—and there is a very fair Danish girl telling me something about her step-father. The girl's name is Elsa Bagge.

January 24 Wrote and finished *Taking the Veil*. It took me about 3 hours to write finally. But I had been thinking over the *décor* and so on for weeks—nay, months, I believe. I can't say how thankful I am to have been born in N.Z., to know Wellington as I do, and to have it to range about in. Writing about the convent seemed so natural. I suppose I have not been in the grounds more than twice. But it is one of the places that remains as vivid as ever. I must not forget the name of *Miss Sparrow*,[1] nor the name *Palmer*.

January 25 Played cribbage with Bogey. I delight in seeing him win. When we play he sometimes makes faces at me—the same kind of faces that Chummie used to make. I think I am never so fond of him as when he does this.

We were talking of the personality of the cat to-day and saying that we ought to write it down. It is true he has become as real as if he could talk. I feel he does talk, and that when he is silent it is only a case of making his nettle shirt and he will begin. Perhaps the most engaging glimpse of him is playing his fiddle with wool for strings or sitting up to the piano and playing Nelly Bly. But his love Isbel, his whole complete little life side by side with ours, ought to be told. I shall never tell it, though.

January 26 Pinker writes to say *The Nation* has taken *The Doll's House*.

A letter from V. and J. I felt these two letters had nothing whatever to do with me. I would not care if I never saw V. again. There is something in her assumed cheerfulness which I can't bear. I'd never get on with her. And J.—is it fancy?—just a touch of carelessness. I feel they are so absolutely insincere. What on earth would I do at Woodhay? It doesn't bear thinking about. I am much nearer Brett for instance.

I am sure that meditation is the cure for the sickness of my

[1]See entry of October 18, 1920.

mind, *i.e.* its lack of control. I have a terribly sensitive mind which receives every impression, and that is the reason why I am so carried away *and* borne under.

January 27 New Moon. Elizabeth came, wearing her woolly lamb. A strange fate overtakes me with her. We seem to be always talking of physical subjects. They bore and disgust me, for I feel it is waste of time, and yet we always revert to them. She lay back on the pillows, talking. She had an absent air. She was saying how fine women were . . . and it was on the tip of my tongue to be indiscreet. But I was not. Thank Heaven!

I have been in pain, in bad pain all day. I ache all over. I can barely stand. It seems impossible that I am going away on Monday.

'Every umbrella hides a warm bud of life'.

January 28 These preparations for flight are almost incredible. The only way to keep calm is to play crib. J. and I sit opposite each other. I feel we are awfully united. And we play and laugh and it seems to keep us together. While the game lasts, we are there. A queer feeling. . . .

The Nation and Athenæum came. I have a deep suspicion of B. He is horrid, and I feel he is going to attack me. It's a prophetic feeling. There was an article on psycho-analysis so absurd, ugly and ridiculous that it's difficult to understand how any editor could have let it pass. J. read me his review of Orage; it seemed to me brilliant. He has improved out of all knowledge. I don't think he has any idea how he has found himself lately. All sounds so easy—so to flow off his pen, and that hard dogmatic style has quite gone. He is a real *critic*.

Denn jeder sieht und stellt die Sachen anders, eben nach seiner Weise.

(1) To escape from the prison of the flesh—of matter. To make the body an instrument, a servant.

(2) To act and not to dream. *To write it down* at all times and at all costs.

What is the universal mind?

OM. Kratu smara kritam smara kratu smara kritam smar. (From the Isha Upanishad.)[1]

January 29 H. came. He says my right lung is practically all right. Can one believe such words? The other is a great deal better. *He* thinks my heart will give me far less trouble at a lower level. Can this be true? He was so hopeful to-day that T.B. seemed no longer a scourge. It seemed that one recovered more often than not. Is this fantastic?

Tidied all my papers. Tore up and ruthlessly destroyed much. This is always a great satisfaction. Whenever I prepare for a journey I prepare as though for death. Should I never return, all is in order. This is what life has taught me.

In the evening I wrote to Orage about his book. It has taken me a week to write the letter. J. and I seem to have played cribbage off and on all day. I feel there is much love between us. Tender love. *Let it not change!*

January 30 There was a tremendous fall of snow on Sunday night. Monday was the first *real* perfect day of the winter. It seemed that the happiness of Bogey and of me reached its zenith on that day. We could not have been happier; that was the feeling. Sitting one moment on the balcony of the bed-room, for instance, or driving in the sleigh through masses of heaped-up snow. He looked so beautiful, too—hatless, strolling about with his hands in his pockets. He weighed himself. 10 stone. There was a harmonium in the waiting-room. Then I went away, after a quick but not hurried kiss. . . .

It was very beautiful on the way to Sierre. Then I kept wondering if I was seeing it all for the last time—the snowy bushes, the leafless trees. 'I miss the buns.'

Pinker told me *The Westminster* had taken *The Garden Party*.

January 31 Travelling is terrible. All is so sordid, and the train shatters one. Tunnels are *hell*. I am frightened of travelling.

[1] Quoted from *Cosmic Anatomy* (p. 106) where the author says: 'The accepted translation is "Om (my) mind, remember (thy) acts, remember (O) mind, remember (thy) act remember."'

We arrived in Paris late, but it was very beautiful—all emerging from water. In the night I looked out and saw *the men with lanterns*. The hotel all sordid again,—fruit peelings, waste-paper, boots, grime, ill-temper. In the evening I saw Manoukhin. But on the way there, nay, even before, I realised my heart was not in it. I feel divided in myself and angry and without virtue. Then L.M. and I had one of our famous quarrels, and I went to the wrong house. Don't forget, as I rang the bell, the scampering and laughter inside. M. had a lame girl there as interpreter. He said through her he could cure me completely. But I did not believe it. It all seemed suddenly unimportant and ugly. But the flat was nice—the red curtains, marble clock, and pictures of ladies with powdered hair.

February 1 At 5.30 I went to the *clinique* and saw the other man, Donat. I asked him to explain the treatment and so on. He did so. But first: as I approached the door it opened and the hall, very light, showed, with the maid smiling, wearing a little shawl, holding back the door. Through the hall a man slipped quickly carrying what I thought was a *cross* of green leaves. Suddenly the arms of the little cross waved feebly, and I saw it was a small child strapped to a wooden tray. While I waited, voices came from another room—very loud voices, M.'s over and above them: *Da! Da!* and then an interrogatory: *Da?* I have the feeling that M. is a really good man. I have also a sneaking feeling (I use that word 'sneaking' advisedly) that he is a kind of unscrupulous impostor. Another proof of my divided nature. All is disunited. Half boos, half cheers.

Yes, that's it. To do anything, to be anything, one must gather oneself together and 'one's faith make stronger'. Nothing of any worth can come from a disunited being. It's only by accident that I write anything worth a rush, and then it's only skimming the top—no more. But remember *The Daughters* [*of the Late Colonel*] was written at Menton in November when I was not so bad as usual. I was trying with all my soul to be good. Here I try and fail, and the fact of my consciousness makes each separate

failure very important—each a *sin*. If, combined with M.'s treatment, I treated myself—worked out of this slough of despond —lived an honourable life—and, above all, made straight my relations with L.M.—I am a *sham*. I am also an egoist of the deepest dye—such a one that it was very difficult to confess to it in case this book should be found. Even my being well is a kind of occasion for *vanity*. There is nothing worse for the soul than egoism. Therefore . . .

February 3 I went at 3 for a treatment. A curious impression remains. M.'s beautiful gesture coming into the room was perfect. But D. shouted so, pushed his face into mine, asked me *indecent* questions. Ah, that's the horror of being ill. One must submit to having one's secrets held up to the light, and regarded with a cold stare. D. is a proper Frenchman. 'Êtes-vous constipée?' Shall I ever forget that, and his face pushed into mine and the band of his tie showing over his white coat? M. sits apart, smoking, and his head—which is a curious shape: one is conscious of it all the time as of an instrument—hangs forward. But he is deeply different. He desires to reassure. 'Pas de cavernes.'

Had palpitation from the moment of getting on to the table till 5 o'clock. But when I felt this coming on while rays were working, I felt simply horribly callous. I thought: Well, if this kills me—let it! Voilà! That shows how *bad* I am.

February 4 Massingham accepts the idea of a regular story. Heard from Koteliansky about 'people'. It was rather a horrible day. I was ill, and at night I had one of my terrible fits of temper over a parcel. Is it possible one can be so unruly?

Heard from M. saying he prefers to remain in Montana. All his letters now are the same. There breathes in them the relief from strain. It is remarkable. He does not believe a word about M. and talks of coming to 'fetch' me in May. Well, if I am any better, there will never be any more *fetching*. Of that I am determined. The letter kept me awake until very late. And my sciatica! Put it on record, in case it ever goes. What a pain it is. Remember

to give it to someone in a story one day. Ida is a very tragic figure. Remember her eyes—the pupils dark black—and her whiteness. Even her hair seems to grow pale. She folded the quilt and held it in her arms as though it was a baby.

February 5 First quarter of the moon. Wrote at my story, read Shakespeare. Read Goethe, thought, prayed.

The day was cold and fine. But I felt ill and could do nothing but lie still all day. This going to Paris has been so much more important than it seemed. Now I begin to see it as the result, the ending to all that reading. I mean that even *Cosmic Anatomy* is involved. Something has been built, a raft, frail and not very seaworthy; but it will serve. Before, I was cast into the water when I was 'alone'—I mean during my illness—and now something supports me. But much is to be done. Much discipline and meditation is needed. Above all, it is important to get work done. Heard from Pinker that Cassells have taken *A Cup of Tea*. Wrote giving my change of address to various people.

Thought about French women and their impudent confidence in the power of sex.

February 6 Letters from Brett and M. Brett's letter was the most beautiful I have ever received. It gave me a strange shock to find M. never even asked how things were going. A boyish letter like so many I have had, but absolutely impersonal. It might have been written to anyone. True, he was anxious for the post. But . . . that was because he is alone. Do I make M. up? Is he thankful to sink into himself again? I feel relief in every line. There's no strain —nothing that binds him. Then let it continue so. But I will not take a house anywhere. I, too, will be free. (I write exactly as I feel.) I do not want to see M. again just now. I shall beg him not to come here. He is at present just like a fish that has escaped from the hook.

A bad day. I felt ill, in an obscure way—horrible pains and so on and weakness. I could do nothing. The weakness was not only physical. I *must heal my Self* before I will be well.

Yes, that is the important thing. No attention is needed here. This must be done alone and at once. It is at the root of my not getting better. My mind is not *controlled*. I idle, I give way, I sink into despair. And though I have 'given up' the idea of true marriage now (by the way, what an example is this of the nonsense of time. One week ago we never were nearer. A few days ago we were fast. And now I feel I have been away from M. for months. It's true I cannot bear to think about the things I love in him . . . little things. But if one gives them up they will fade). I am not complete as I must be.

The *Sketch* has taken *The Veil* and wants more.

February 8 A day passed in the usual violent agitation, such as Jack only can fling me into. Now, he will come. There's no stopping him. But it's put down to my wanting him. He is absolutely entangled in himself, as usual. First, my novel wouldn't, then it would. Never was such a (coin a word) *shell*-fish! I hate this in him. It's low to put it all down to me, too. And when he chooses to find tears, he'll find them. There wasn't a suspicion of a tear. In fact, this whole horrible devastating affair which nearly kills me—revolts me too. His very frankness is a falsity. In fact it seems falser than his insincerity. I've often noticed that. Went to that flat with the 'girls and Uncle'. The view outside. Showing off the bedroom. 'Violà la CHAMBRE!' The stockings like snakes in the back[room?].

February 9 Have got a bad chill. I have in the Bank at this moment £103 odd. Ida has been noble about this looking for flats, for she is worn out, and she absolutely does not complain once. Just goes and does it all. I have fever and feel as though I've got a very bad attack of chill coming on. Nothing makes me ill like this business with J. It just *destroys* me. . . . It was a miserable day. In the night I thought for hours of the evils of uprooting. Every time one leaves anywhere, something precious, which ought not to be killed, is left to die.

I did not go to the *clinique* because of my chill. Spent the day in

bed, reading the papers. The feeling that someone was coming towards me was too strong for me to work. It was like sitting on a bench at the end of a long avenue in a park and seeing someone far in the distance coming your way. She tries to read. The book is in her hand, but it's all nonsense, and might as well be upside down. She reads the advertisements as though they were part of the articles.

I must not forget the long talk Ida and I had the other evening about *hate*. What is hate? Who has ever described it? Why do I feel it for her? She says: 'It is because I am nothing, I have suppressed all my desires to such an extent that now I have none. I don't think. I don't feel.' I reply: 'If you were cherished and loved for a week, you would recover.' And that is true, and I would like to do it. It seems I ought to do it. But I don't. The marvel is that she understands. No one else on earth could understand.

All that week she had her little corner. 'I may come into my little corner to-night?' she asks timidly, and I reply—so cold, so cynical—'If you want to.' But what would I do if she didn't come?

Jack arrived early in the morning with a letter for me—*never to be forgotten*. In half an hour it seemed he had been here a long time. I still regret his leaving there for *his* sake. I know it is right for our sake. We went together to the *clinique*. Bare leafless trees. A wonderful glow in the sky: the windows flashed fire. Manoukhin drew the picture of my heart. I wish he had not. I am haunted by the hideous picture, by the thought of my heart, like a heavy drop in my breast. But he is good.

February 12 Full moon. We put the chess-men on the board and began to play. It was an unsettled day. Ida in and out with no home,—no place—whirled like a leaf along this dark passage and then out into the raw street.

Jack read the Tchehov aloud. I had read one of the stories myself and it seemed to me nothing. But read aloud, it was a masterpiece. How was that?

I want to remember the evening before. I was asleep. He came in—thrust his head in at the door and *as* I woke, I did not know

him. I saw a face which reminded me of his mother and Richard. But I felt a kind of immediate dread confusion. I knew I ought to know it and that it belonged to him, yet he was as it were not present. I think this is what people who are going out of their minds must feel about the faces that bend over them and old, old people about their children. And that accounts for the foolish offended look in their faces sometimes. They feel it's not right they should not know.

February 13 A.M. Felt ill all day. Feeling of violent confusion in my body and head. I feel more ill now than ever, so it seems.

Jack went out and bought a tea-pot and so on; also a game of chess and we started playing. But the pains in my back and so on make my prison almost unendurable. I manage to get up, to dress, to make a show of getting to the restaurant and back without being discovered. But that is literally all. The rest is rather like being a beetle shut in a book, so shackled that one can do nothing but lie down. And even to lie down becomes a kind of agony. The worst of it is I have again lost hope. I don't, I can't believe this will change. I have got off the raft again and am swept here and there by the sea.

February 14 Another hellish day. But Jack found some pastilles which help my throat, and it seemed to me they had a calming effect on my heart.

I had one of my perfect dreams. I was at sea, sailing with my parasol opened to just a 'freshet' of wind. Heavenly the sea, the sky, the land—parasol pink—boat pale pink.

If I could only get over my discouragement! But who is going to help with that? Now that Ida is away I have more to do—all my clothes and so on to put away and pull out, as well as a bowl or two to wash. The effort uses what remains of my strength. By 5 o'clock I am finished and must go to bed again.

It is a very dull day. The canaries sing. I have been reading Bunin's stories. He is not a sympathetic soul, but it is good to read him . . . he carries one away.

February 17 Went to the *clinique*. I felt that all was wrong there. Manoukhin was distrait and a little angry. Donat as usual sailed over everything. But that means nothing. It seemed to me there had been some trouble or some trouble was brewing.

The servant there is a very beautiful plump woman with a ravishing smile. Her eyes are grey. She curls her hair in a small fringe and she wears a little grey shawl, an apron, and a pair of rather high boots; stepping lightly, with one small plump hand holding the shawl, she opens the door.

The Dressmaker.

One advantage in having your clothes made by Miss Phillips was that you had to go through the garden to get to the house. Perhaps it was the only advantage, for Miss Phillips was a strange, temperamental dressmaker with ever a surprise up her—no, indeed—in your own sleeve, for you. Sleeves were her weakness, her terror. I fancy she looked upon them as devils, to be wrestled with but never overcome. Now a 'body', once she had tried it on first in newspaper, then in unbleached calico and finally in the lining, she could make a very pretty fit to the figure. She liked to linger over her bodies, to stroke them, to revolve round them, hissing as was her wont, faintly. But the moment she dreaded came at last.

'Have you cut out the sleeve, Miss Phillips?'

'Yes, Miss. I 'ave—one moment, Miss. If you please!' And with a look half peevish half desperate, the strange funnel-shaped thing was held up for your arm to thrust into.

'The armhole is *very* tight, Miss Phillips.'

'They're wearing them very small this seasing, Miss.'

'But I can't get my hand near my head.'

'Near your red, Miss?' echoed Miss Phillips, as though it was the first time she had ever heard of this gymnastic feat being attempted. Finally, she repinned it and raised it on the shoulder.

'But now it's much too short, Miss Phillips. I wanted a lo—ong sleeve . . . I wanted a point over the hand.' Points over the hand seemed to me, still seem to me, excessively romantic.

'Oh, Miss!' The tiny scissors then went 'sneep—sneep', like a bird on a cold morning, cut out a brown paper cuff and Miss Phillips pinned it on with fingers that trembled; while I frowned on the top of her head and even made faces at her in my rage. Her hair was so strange. It was grey, all in little tufts. It reminded you of a sheepskin hearthrug. And there were always threads, minute triangles of stuff, pieces of fluff sticking to it. It didn't want brushing, I thought, so much as a good sweeping and a shake out of window. In person Miss Phillips was extremely thin and squeezed in so tightly that every breath creaked, and in moments of emotion she sounded like a ship at sea. She invariably wore the same black alpaca apron frilled, and on her left breast—oh, how cruel, how sinister it looked to me!—a tight little red plush heart pierced all over with needles and pins, and a malignant-looking safety-pin or two to stab deeper——

'If you please, Miss, while I unpin you . . .' Her small hard hands flew up, perched, gripped like claws. She had a thin nose with just one dab of red on the tip as though some wicked child with a paint-brush had caught her sleeping.

'Thank you, Miss Phillips. And you'll let me have it on Saturday?'

'Satterday for certing, Miss,' hissed Miss Phillips through a bristling mouthful of pins.

While I dressed in front of the long mirror that had spots at the side like frosted fingerprints, I loved to discover again that funny little room. In the corner by the fire-place stood the 'model' covered in red sateen. Its solidity ended at the hips in wire rings that reminded you of a Dover egg-beater. But what a model it was! What shoulders, what a bosom—what curves, and no horrible arms to be clothed in sleeves, no head to be reached up to. It was Miss Phillips's God. It was also, I decided, a perfect lady. Thus and thus only do perfect ladies appear in the extreme privacy of her apartments. But above all, it was god-like. I saw Miss Phillips alone, abstracted, lavishing her stuffs upon that imperturbable altar. Perhaps her failures even were to be excused. They were all part of a frenzy for sacrifice. . . .

The following is a further list of stories, made in early February, of stories planned for a volume to follow The Garden Party. *It is noticeable that only two of the stories planned in the lists of October,* 1921 *were still in contemplation: namely,* The Major and the Lady (*which is the same as* Widowed), *and* Honesty (*or* Second Violin). *Two stories on this list were subsequently ticked off, apparently as finished:* The Fly *and* Lucien. *But if* Lucien *was really finished nothing remains of it except the fragment printed below. Other stories in this list of which fragments remain are* The Mother, A Visit, Sisters, The New Baby, Confidences, *and* Aunt Fan. *These are also printed.*

The Major and the Lady.
The Mother.
The Fly.
An Unhappy Man.
Lucien.
Down the Sounds.
A Visit (The Lily).
Sisters.
The New Baby.
Confidences.
The Dreamers.
Aunt Fan.
Honesty.
Best Girl.

A Cup of Tea.
[*January* 11, 1922]
Taking the Veil.
[*January* 24, 1922]
The Doll's House.
[*October* 30, 1921]

February 20 Finished *The Fly*.

The Mother.

There are certain human beings on this earth who do not care a safety-pin whether their loved one is beautiful or pretty or youthful or rich. One thing only they ask of her, and that is that she should smile.

'Smile! Smile now!' their eyes, their fingers, their toes, and even their tiny jackets say. In fact, the tassel of little Jean's cap, which was much too big for him and hung over one eye with a drunken effect, said it loudest of all.

Every time his mother swooped forward to put it straight, it

was all she could do not to lift him out of the pram and press him—squeeze him to her shoulder while she rubbed her cheek against his white cheek, and told him what she thought of him.

Jean's cheeks were white because he lived in a basement. He was, however, according to his mother, a perfectly healthy child, and good—lively. He had merry, almost cunning, little eyes.

'Smile!' said Jean's eyebrows, which were just beginning to show.

On a perfect spring afternoon he and his mother set out for the Jardins Publiques together. It was his first spring. A year ago he had been of course much too young—six months only!—to be in the open air for any length of time. Even now his mother wheeled him out in the teeth of his grandmother's awful prophecies and the neighbours' solemn warnings. The open air is so weakening for a baby and the sun, as everyone knows, is very, very dangerous. One catches fever from sitting in the sun, colds in the head, weeping eyes. Jean's Gran, before daring to face its rays, plugged her ears with wool, wrapped herself round in an extra black shawl, gave a final twist which hid her mouth and her pale beak-like nose, and pulled black woollen mitts over her cotton ones. Thus attired, with a moan of horror, she scuttled away to the bread shop and, having scuttled back, she drank something blue out of a bottle as an extra precaution. . . .

But there was a wicked recklessness about Jean's mother. First she had made up her mind to buy a pram, and she had bought one second-hand. Then she had set her heart on taking Jean to the Jardins Publiques. And here they were!

It is lovely in the public gardens; it is full spring. The lilac is in flower, the new grass quivers in the light, and the trees, their delicate leaves gold in the sun, stand with branches outspread as if in blessing.

Up the main path go Jean and his mother. She is extremely proud of him, and she is proud of herself for having managed to bring him there. The wheels of the pram squeak and this delights her, too, for she thinks everyone will notice it and look at Jean. But nobody does. Mothers, nurses, babies, lovers, students go by

in a stream. A little boy tugs his grandfather's hand. Then he says 'Run!' And they stagger off together. It is hard to say which will fall down first.

But all this is absolutely mysterious to little Jean. First, he looks one side; then he looks the other. Then he stares at his mother, who nods and says 'Cuckoo!' But how does 'Cuckoo' explain anything? For a moment he wonders if he ought to cry. But there seems to be nothing to cry about—so he jumps up and down instead and tries to burst out of some of the tight hot little coats and shawls that are half-smothering him. The heat in the pram is terrible; he is sitting on a blanket, a broad strap cuts across his legs, and on either side, at his feet, and behind his head, there are large newspaper parcels which contain his mother's mending.

'Are you hungry? Are you hungry? Hungry? Hungry?' asks his mother as she wheels the pram over to a bench and sits down. Jean is never hungry. But he takes the biscuit that she shows to him, nibbles it, and stares at the grass on the other side of the low railing.

Lucien.

Lucien's mother was a dressmaker. They lived in the village with the big church down in the valley. It was a very big church, it was enormous; it had two towers like horns. On misty days, when you climbed the hill and looked down and you heard the great bell jangle, it reminded you of a large pale cow. Lucien was nine years old. He was not like other boys. For one thing he had no father, and for another, he did not go to school, but stayed at home all day with his mother. He was delicate. When he was very small his head had gone so soft, so soft, like a jelly, that his mother had had to clap two boards to it to prevent it from shaking. It was quite hard now, but the shape was a little bit queer, and his hair was fine, like down rather than real hair. But he was a good child, gentle, quiet, giving no trouble, and handy with his needle as a girl of twelve. The customers did not mind him. The big, blousy peasant women who came to his mother's room to try on, unhooked their bodices and stood in their stays, scratching their red arms and shouting at his mother, without so much as a glance at

him. And he could be trusted to go to shop. (With what a sigh his mother rummaged in the folds of her petticoat, brought out her shabby purse with a clasp, and counted and thumbed the coins before she dropped them into his little claw!) He could be trusted to leave at the right houses large bulky newspaper parcels held together with long rusty pins. On these excursions Lucien talked to nobody and seldom stopped to look. He trotted along like a little cat out-of-doors, keeping close to the fences, darting into the shop and out again, and only revealing himself fully when he had to stand tip-toe on the top step of the house and reach up for the high knocker. This moment was terrifying to him . . .

Down the Sounds.

As the little steamer rounded the point and came into the next bay, they noticed the flag was flying from Putnam's Pier. That meant there were passengers to bring off. The Captain swore. They were half-an-hour late already and he couldn't bear not to be up to time. But Putnam's flag, cherry-red against the green bush in this brilliant morning, jigged gaily, to show it didn't care a flick for the Captain's feelings.

There were three people and an old sheep-dog waiting. One was a little old woman, nearing seventy perhaps, very spry, with a piece of lilac in her bonnet and pale lilac strings. She carried a bundle wrapped in a long shawl, white as a waterfall. Beside her stood the young parents. He was tall, broad, awkward in a stiff black suit with banana-yellow shoes and a light blue tie, and she looked soft and formless in a woollen coat; her hat was like a child's with its wreath of daisies, and she carried a bag like a child's school-kit, stuffed very full and covered with a cloth.

As the steamer drew near, the old sheep-dog ran forward and made a sound that was like the beginning of a bark, but he turned it off into an old dog's cough, as though he had decided that the little steamer wasn't worth barking about. The coil of rope was thrown, was looped; the one-plank gangway was spanned across, and over it tripped the old woman, running and bridling like a girl of eighteen.

'Thank you, Captain!' said she, giving the Captain a bird-like, impudent little nod.

'That's all right, Mrs. Putnam,' said old Captain Reid, who had known her for the last forty years.

After her came the sheep-dog, then the young woman, looking lost, and she was followed by the young man, who seemed terribly ashamed about something. He kept his head bent, he walked stiff as wood in his creaking shoes, and a long brown hand twisted away, twisted away at his fair moustache.

Old Captain Reid winked broadly at the passengers. He stuffed his hands in his short jacket, drew in a breath as if he was going to sing. 'Morning, Mr. Putnam!' he roared. And the young man straightened himself with an immense effort and shot a terrified glance at the Captain. 'Morning, Cap'n!' he mumbled.

Captain Reid considered him, shaking his head. 'It's all right, my lad,' he said. 'We've all been through it. Jim here'—and he jerked his head at the man at the wheel—'had twins last time, hadn't you, Jim?'

'That's ri', Cap'n,' said Jim, grinning broadly at the passengers. The little steamer quivered, throbbed, started on her way again, while the young man, in an agony, not greeting anyone, creaked off to the bows, and the two women—they were the only women on board—sat themselves down on a green bench against the white deck-rail. As soon as they had sat down,

'There, Mother, let me take him!' said the young woman anxiously, quietly. She tossed the kit away.

But Gran didn't want to give him up.

'Now don't you go tiring yourself,' said she. 'He's as nice as can be where he is.'

Torture! The young woman gave a gasp like a sob.

'Give him to me!' she said, and she actually twitched at her mother-in-law's sleeve.

The old woman knew perfectly well what she was feeling. Little channels for laughter showed in her cheeks. 'My goodness gracious me!' she pretended to scold. 'There's impatience for you.' But even while she spoke she swung the baby gently, gently

into its mother's arms. 'There now!' said Gran, and she sat up sharp and gave the bow of her bonnet strings a tweak, as though she was glad to have her hands free after all.

It was an exquisite day. It was one of those days so clear, so still, so silent, you almost feel the earth itself has stopped in astonishment at its own beauty.

A Visit (*The Lily*).

As old Mr. Rendall sat at the window with the rug over his knees, with his spectacles, folded handkerchief, medicine and newspaper on a little table beside him—as he sat there, looking out, he saw a large, strange cat bound on to the fence and jump right into the very middle of his lawn. Old Mr. Rendall hated cats. The sight of this one, so bold, so care-free, roving over the grass, sniffing, chewing at a blade of something as though the whole place belonged to it, sent a quiver of rage through him. He shifted his feet in the felt slippers, his hands lifted, trembled, and grasped the knobs of his chair.

'Tss!' he said, glaring spitefully at the cat. But it was a small feeble sound. Of course, the cat did not hear. What was to be done? His yellowish old eyes glanced round the parlour for something to throw. But even supposing there had been something—a shell off the mantelpiece, or a glass paper-weight from the centre table, surely old Mr. Rendall knew he could no more throw it at the cat than the cat could throw it back at him.

Ah, the hateful beast! It was a large tabby with a thin tail and a round flat face like a penny bun. Now, folding its paws, it squatted down exactly opposite the parlour window, and it was impossible not to believe that its bold gaze was directed expressly at him. It knew how he hated it. Much it cared. It had come into his world without asking, it would stay as long as it chose and go again when the fancy seized it.

A cold snatch of wind raked the grass, blew in the fur of the tabby, rattled the laburnum, and sent the kitchen smoke spinning downwards on the stony little garden. High up in the air there sounded a loud hooting and shrieking as the wind passed by. And

it seemed to old Mr. Rendall that the wind was against him, too, was in league with the cat, and made that shrill sound on purpose to defy him.

Why did Maria put his chair in the window always? Sun or no sun she stuck him in the window as if he had been a canary.

'Well,' said Janet, sighing—she always sighed at moments of leave-taking—'if we are to catch that train we must be going.' And lifting her chin, she began to retie her bonnet-strings.

'Get down, Susannah.'

Susannah slid over the slippery chair. She was glad to go.

'I'll look in again when I'm passing,' said Janet. 'Shake hands, Susannah, and say goodbye . . . No, not that hand, child—the other.'

Bowing deeply, as though bitterly ashamed, the little girl crept out after her grandmother.

When they were gone, old Mr. Rendall lay down on the horse-hair sofa. He felt better altogether, easier and lighter, now he had torn the lily from its stem. Hm! The wan blood tingled in his veins. He threw his handkerchief over his face, thinking with almost a chuckle there was life in the old dog yet.

Confidences.

'You know, my dear,' said Kitty, standing in the middle of the drawing room and stripping off her white gloves, 'your house is too lovely for words. But too lovely!' She had just arrived, a little out of breath as usual, but so charmingly breathless, her eyes wide, her lips half open, and the parma violets agitated in the front of her gown. 'I don't know what it is,' she went on gaily, 'but one always has the feeling it's so alive.' And she turned quickly towards her friend. 'You know what I mean. Don't you feel it too?'

But Eve, who was lighting a cigarette, made no reply for a moment. She took a puff, breathed deeply, and then fixing her

eyes on the lighted tip of her cigarette, she said, rather queerly, 'Yes, I certainly used to feel that.'

Used to? Why used to? Now that Kitty looked at her closely, she fancied Eve was pale. Her expression changed (she was a marvellously sympathetic woman) and lifting her hands to her violets she sank into a chair and said softly, 'This weather's awfully trying, don't you agree?'

Eve sat down too. But still she did not look at her friend. With her finger-tip she flattened the tobacco in her cigarette and in the same unnatural voice she murmured, 'Yes, I suppose it is. I've not been out. I haven't noticed.'

This seemed to Kitty so strange that quickly she leaned forward and laid her hand on her friend's silken knee. 'You're not ill, darling?' she asked tenderly.

But Eve as quickly drew back. 'Oh, please, don't touch me,' she pleaded, waving Kitty away. 'Don't be too nice to me!' And now there was no doubt about it. There were tears in her eyes, her lips were trembling. 'I shall make a fool of myself if you do. I . . . I ought not to have seen anybody this afternoon . . .'

(*February* 21, 1922.)

Sisters.

Just as they reached the gate, Agnes turned back.

'Where are you going now, my dear?' said Gertrude quickly.

'The sun's so boiling, I must have my parasol.'

'Oh, well, bring mine too, will you?' And Gertrude waited. In her pink dress, with one hand on the half-open gate, she felt like a picture. But, unfortunately, there was no one to see except the florid butcher spanking past in his yellow cart. Well, even a butcher is somebody, she thought, as Agnes came running back over the small blue gravel.

'Thanks! It is boiling. I had no idea.'

'Roasting—isn't it?' said dark Agnes.

And, putting up their parasols, off they sailed down the Avenue, on the way to the Misses Phipps to try on their new evening dresses. There they go, thought Gertrude, and there they go,

thought Agnes,—the daughters of rich parents, young and attractive, one fair, one dark, one a soprano, one a contralto, with all the really thrilling things in life still to happen to them. And just then Major Trapp on his big chestnut horse turned into the Avenue, and dashing past saluted them; and they both bowed, charmingly, graciously like swans.

'He's out very early,' said Gertrude.

'Very!' came from Agnes.

'I've not got my hat too far forward, have I?' asked Gertrude anxiously.

'I don't think so,' answered wicked Agnes.

By great good fortune the tram was empty. The sisters had it all to themselves. Feeling grand, down they sat in one of the small wooden pens. The conductor blew his whistle, the driver banged his bell, the fat small horses started forward and away they swung. Merrily danced the pink bobbles on the fringes of the cotton blinds, and gaily the sunlight raced under the arched roof.

'But what on earth am I to do with this?' cried Gertrude, gazing with exaggerated scorn and horror at the bouquet that old Mr. Phipps had cut and bound together so lovingly.

Agnes screwed up her eyes and smiled at the unearthly white and gold arum lily and the dove-blue columbines. 'I don't know,' said she. 'You can't possibly cart it about with you. It's like a barmaid's wedding bouquet.' And she laughed and put her hand to her glorious coil of thick hair.

Gertrude tossed it on to the floor, and kicked it under the seat. Just in time, as it happened.

The New Baby.

At half-past ten the yacht steamed into the Sound, slowed down. . . . 'Hullo!' said someone. 'We've stopped.' For a moment, and it seemed like a long moment, everybody was silent. They heard the crying of the little waves from the distant beach, the soft moist breath of the large wind came flowing gently over the dark sea. And, looking up at the sky, one fancied that those merrily

burning stars were telling one another that the yacht had anchored for the night.

Then, 'Come on, girls!' cried the genial old Mayor. And Gertrude Pratt began to bang out *The Honeysuckle and the Bee* on the squat tiny little piano. As the whole party had sung the same song every night for the past three weeks, the noise was considerable, but very pleasant. It was an extraordinary relief after the long dazzling day to lie on deck and put all one's heart into

I love you dearly, dearly and I
Want you to love me. . . .

You couldn't say these things. And yet you felt them. At least—the ladies did. Not for anybody in particular but for everybody, for the lamp even, hanging from the deck-awning, for Tanner the steward's hand as it stroked the guitar. Love! Love! there was no escaping it. It was all very well to pretend to be interested in other things, to look through the glasses, to ask the Captain intelligent questions as you stood on the bridge, to admire Mrs. Strutt's marvellous embroidery. . . .

There were exquisite small shells to be found on these beaches, a small greeny-blue kind, coral spirals, and tiny yellow ones like grains of maize.

They asked them questions, had a good look at everything, ate the fruit, or whatever they were offered, and took photographs. If there was a swing—and there was usually an old-fashioned one, hanging from a branch in the orchard—the girls got the men to push them, and they flew, their gossamer veils streaming, while the Mayor sat out on the verandah talking to their host, and the older ladies had a quiet chat somewhere within doors.

'We . . . my wife, that is . . .' But it would not do. He began to smile and it seemed he could not smile . . . simple . . . childish . . . yes. 'As a matter of fact our first kid turned up this morning at half-past three. A fine boy.'

The Mayor stopped and dug his umbrella into the sand. He

didn't quite grasp it for the moment. 'You mean—was born?' said he.

'That's it,' said the other, nodding.

'Great Scott!' said the Mayor, and he turned back and called his wife. 'Mother! they've got a new baby!'

The flowers in the garden *look like it*. So do the little wet shells on the beach. So does the house. All seems to breathe freshness, peace. I especially see those shells - so naive-looking.

'Take them!' he said gently, and bending down he ruffled the leaves and began to gather the fruit.

'Stop! Stop!' she said, shocked. 'You're cutting them all. You'll have none on the bush.'

'Why not?' he said simply. 'You're welcome!'

And they came away thinking 'What a life!' All very well to land there for an hour or two on a glorious morning, but imagine being stuck there, month in- year in, year out—with nothing to look at but the sea, with for one's greatest excitement -getting fresh ferns for the fireplace! 'Christ! what a life!' thought the men, pacing up and down the deck waiting for the lunch-bell, and 'My dear, just imagine it!' thought the ladies, powdering their noses in the flat cabin mirrors. And lunch in the bright saloon, with the port-holes open and the stewards flying to and fro in their linen jackets, always seemed particularly good afterwards.

But it is an intensely difficult story to write. It is difficult to get going.

(February 26, 1922.)

Aunt Kar.

'Have you seen my cosmias, dear? Have you noticed my cosmias to-day? Really, even though they are mine I must say I've never seen so fine a show. Everybody remarks on them. People stop to stare. I think it's so marvellous of the children not

to pick them now that they show over the fence. Those mauve ones! Did you ever see anything so delicate? Such an uncommon colour, too! And when I think all that beauty came out of one little threepenny packet from the D.I.C. . . .'

Frail as butterflies, the petals of the cosmias fluttered like wings in the gently breathing air. They were warm white, mauve, pale pink and lemon yellow. And, peeping through the delicate green, you could still see in the garden bed the little soiled seed packet stuck in a cleft of stick. Kezia remembered the day when she had watched Aunt Fan tear off a corner, shake the seed, like minute canary seed, then pat the fine earth over. And afterwards they had stood together, just as they were standing now, gazing at nothing, but seeing—just what they looked at this very minute. What was the difference really? It was too hard to understand. She said:

'They are most lovely, Aunt Fan.'

'Look at that bee, Kezia! Look at that great velvety fellow!'

They watched him. When he clung to a cosmia the flower leaned over, swung, quivered, it seemed to be teasing him, and when he flew away the petals moved as though they were laughing.

'But really I must go, Aunt Fan.'

'One moment, darling. I'll just get my kitchen scissors and snip off a dead head or two while you're here.' She was there and back again on the instant, and before Kezia realised what was happening, quickly, lavishly, Aunt Fan had begun cutting her finest largest flowers.

'Oh, Aunt Fan, what are you doing!' Kezia was horrified. 'Stop! I don't want one. Why will you always give everything away? We've millions and billions of flowers at home. The vases were only done yesterday. Oh, Aunt *Fan*!'

'Only these, Kezia, only this little selection for your own vase in your room.' She thrust them into Kezia's hand and squeezed the reluctant fingers.

'They flower all the better for being cut. You know that's true.'

Yes, that was comforting, Kezia smiled at an exquisite half-open bud, the petals springing from the centre like the feathers of a tiny shuttlecock.

'Well, goodbye, Aunt Fan.'

She turned, Aunt Fan took her in her arms, held her close, looked, just an instant, intently and gravely at her before she gave her a quick light kiss.

Comme il faut.

At precisely the right moment, neither too early nor too late, their large blue car, which was exactly like all the other cars, turned in at the iron gates, scrunched over the small gravel and came to a stop under an immense glass porch. Their behaviour then and the moment after was perfect. Unhurried, even a little reluctant, they got out. She stood staring, with no expression whatever in her blue eyes, over the heads of those who were already established at the garden tables; and he looked faintly contemptuous, bored, and as if determined to stand no nonsense from the dog-like fawning waiters.

And, smiling faintly, he looked into his wife's smiling face. 'Wherever the house happened to be,' he added softly.

May 1 Oh, what will this beloved month bring?

May 3 *Paris.* I must begin writing for Clement Shorter to-day 12 'spasms' of 2,000 words each. I thought of the Burnells, but no, I don't think so. Much better, the Sheridans, the three girls and the brother and the Father and Mother and so on, ending with a long description of Meg's wedding to Keith Fenwick. Well, there's the first flown out of the nest. The sisters Bead, who come to stay. The white sheet on the floor when the wedding dress is tried on. Yes, I've got the details all right. But the point is—Where shall I begin? One certainly wants to dash.

Meg was playing. I don't think I ought to begin with that. It seems to me the mother's coming home ought to be the first chapter. The other can come later. And in that playing chapter

what I want to stress chiefly is: Which is the real life—that or this?—late afternoon, these thoughts—the garden—the beauty—how all things pass—and how the end seems to come so soon.

And then again there is the darling bird—I've always loved birds—Where is the little chap? . . .

What is it that stirs one so? What is this seeking—so joyful—ah, so gentle! And there seems to be a moment when all is to be discovered. Yes, that is the feeling. . . .

The queer thing is I only remember how much I have forgotten when I hear that piano. The garden of the Casino, the blue pansies. But oh, how *am* I going to write this story?

An unposted letter.

I feel as though I have become embedded in this hotel. The weeks pass and we do less and less, and seem to have no time for anything. Up and down in the left, along the corridors, in and out of the restaurant—it's a whole, complete life. One has a name for everybody; one is furious if someone has taken 'our table', and the little gritty breakfast-trays whisk in and out unnoticed, and it seems quite natural to carry about that heavy key with the stamped brass disk 134. I am 134, and Murry is 135.

Oh, dear—I have so much to tell you, so much I would like to write about. Your last enchanting letter has remained too long unanswered. I wish you could *feel* the joy such letters give me. When I have finished reading one of your letters, I go on thinking, wishing, talking it over, almost listening to it. . . . Do feel, do know how much I appreciate them—so much more than I can say!

I must reply about *Ulysses*. I have been wondering what people are saying in England. It took me about a fortnight to wade through, but on the whole I'm dead *against* it. I suppose it was worth doing if everything is worth doing . . . but that is certainly not what I want from literature. Of course, there are amazingly fine things in it, but I prefer to go without them than to pay that price. Not because I am shocked (though I am fear-

fully shocked, but that's 'personal'; I suppose it's unfair to judge the book by that) but because I simply don't believe. . . .

Room 135.

Well, who could have believed it—who could have imagined it? What a marvellous, what a miraculous thing has happened! I'm trembling, I feel quite . . . But I mustn't get too excited; one must keep one's sense of proportion. Be calm!

I can't. I can't! Not just for the moment. If you could feel my heart! It's not beating very fast, not racing, as they say, but it's simply quivering—an extraordinary sensation—and if I am quite sincere, I feel such a longing to kneel down. Not to pray. I scarcely know what for. To say 'Forgive me!' To say 'My darling!' But I should cry if I said it. My darling! My darling! Do you know I've never known anyone well enough to call them that. It's a beautiful word, isn't it? And one puts out one's hand when one says it and just touches the other . . . No, no. It's fatal to think such things. One mustn't let oneself go.

Here I am—back in my room. I should like to go over to the window and open it wide. But I daren't yet. Supposing he were looking out of his and he saw; it might seem marked. One can't be too careful. I will stay where I am for the present until my—my excitement dies down a little. No. 134. That is the number of my room. I only realised at that moment that I am still holding my big flat door-key. What is his number? Oh, I have wondered that so often. Shall I ever know? Why should I? And yet after what has just happened. . . .

If a flash-light photograph had been taken at that moment, or a fire had broken out and we had been unable to move and only our charred bodies found, it would have been the most natural thing in the world for people to suppose we were—together. We must have looked exactly like the other couples. Even his reading the newspaper and not speaking to me seemed to make it more natural. . . .

This tenderness, this longing. This feeling of waiting for something. What is it? Come! Come! And then one goes out, and

there are new leaves on the trees, the light shakes on the grass and everywhere there is a gentle stirring.

I have never been very good at imagining things. Some people have so much imagination. They make up long stories about the future. . . .

May 28 It seems so much more real now than when I last wrote. Then I felt that at any moment I would be whisked back into my cage; and every time I went out, I wondered if I should have to turn back. But it's marvellous how soon one accepts blessings. Curses one never gets used to.

An unposted letter.

May Just a line to say—J. and I both have so much work to do this summer that we have decided when we leave here (end of this month) to go to the Hotel d'Angleterre, Randogne. Does that make you open your eyes? But in the summer, June and July, that place was so lovely and I know it. It would only take a day to settle and a look at the mountains, before we could work. All other arrangements are too difficult—Germany and so on. We have not, literally, the time to discover a new place and take our bearings. Then we shall be near Elizabeth, too. The winter we are going to spend in Bandol at the Beau Rivage. I am going to get a maid now at once. I can't do without one. I simply have not the time to attend to everything and I can't bear, as you know, 'untidiness'. I shall advertise in *The Daily Mail*. Jack may be going to lecture in England this autumn too, so I should like to have a really trustworthy person to post letters and so on and be with me. . . . Don't speak of our plans, by chance, will you?

There is a really superb professional pianist here. He plays nearly all day and one writes *to* his music. Au revoir. K. M.

In May Katherine left Paris to spend the summer in Switzerland, her plan then being to return to Paris in October for a second course of the same treatment, which seemed to the outside observer to have been beneficial.

But Katherine never believed that she would die of consumption, but always of heart-failure, and she thought that her heart had grown worse

under the treatment. And, deeper than this, she had come to the conviction that her bodily health depended upon her spiritual condition. Her mind was henceforward preoccupied with discovering some way to 'cure her soul'; and she eventually resolved, to my great regret, to abandon her treatment, and to live as though her grave physical illness were incidental, and even, so far as she could, as though it were non-existent.

June Randogne, Switzerland. I find the rapture at being alone hard to understand. Certainly when I am sitting out of sight under a tree I feel I could be content *never to return.* As to 'fear', it is gone. It is replaced by a kind of callousness. What will be, will be. But this is not a very useful statement, for I've never put it to the test.

Should I be as happy with anyone at my side? No. I'd begin to talk, and it's far nicer not to talk. Or, if it were Jack he'd open a little blue book by Diderot, *Jacques le Fataliste,* and begin to read it, and that would make me wretched. . . . Why the devil want to read stuffy, snuffy Diderot when there is this other book before one's eyes? I do not want to be a book *worm.* If its book is taken away from it, the little blind head is raised; it wags, hovers, terribly uneasy, in a void—until it begins to burrow again.

Loneliness: 'Oh Loneliness, of my sad heart be Queen!' It isn't in the least that. My heart is not sad except when I am among people, and then I am far too distracted to think about Queens. (Oh, dear! Here is a walking tragedy—Madame with a whole tray of food! And I begged for a bastick, only a bastick!) She came, wandered afield while I sat, and then sat beside me, covering her white stockings with her big limp bouquet. And she talked . . .

The following description is of a family who lived in a small chalet within view of Katherine's window at Randogne.

I have watched this big heavy woman, moving so sullen, plodding in and out with her pails and brushes, coming to the door at midday and evening to look for her husband and child. She looks neither sad nor happy; she looks resigned and stupefied. Sometimes, when she stops and stares round her, she is like a cow that is being driven along a road, and sometimes when, leaning out the window, she watches her quick husband, so jauntily

cutting up logs of wood, I think she hates him—and the sight of her suffocates him.

But to-day, it being the first fine day since the lodgers have come, they went off for a walk and left the nurse-girl in charge of the baby. A 'cradle' made of two straw baskets on trestles was brought out into the sun and the baby *heaped* up in it. Then the nurse girl disappeared.

Round the side of the house came my woman. She stopped. She looked round quickly. She leaned over the cradle and held out her finger to the baby. Then it seemed she was simply overcome with the loveliness and the wonder of this little thing. She tip-toed round the cradle, bent over, shook her head, shook her finger—pulled up a tiny sleeve, looked at a dimpled arm. Her little girl, in a white hat (in honour of the lodgers) danced up. I imagine my woman asked her how she would like a little brother. And the little girl was fascinated, as small children are by smaller.

'Kiss his hand,' said my woman. She watched her daughter, very serious, kiss the tiny hand; and she could hardly bear that anyone should touch the infant but herself. She snatched her daughter away. . . .

When finally she dragged herself away, she was trembling. She went up the steps into the house, stood in the middle of the kitchen, and it seemed that the child within realised her love and moved. A faint, timid smile was on her lips. She believed and she did not believe.

Gyp, their dog, is the most servile creature imaginable. He is a fat brown and white spaniel with a fat round end of tail which wags for everybody at every moment. His passion is for the baby. If anyone throws him sticks he dashes off and brings them back to lay at the foot of the cradle. When his mistress carries the baby, he dances round them so madly, in such a frenzy of delight, that one doesn't believe in him. He *feels* himself one of the family—a family dog.

The master is a very stupid conceited fellow with a large thin nose, a tuft of hair, and long thin legs. He walks slowly, holding

himself perfectly rigid. He keeps his hands in his pockets always. Yesterday he wore all day a pair of pale blue woollen slippers with tassels. And it was obvious he admired himself in these slippers tremendously. To-day he is walking about in his shirt-sleeves, wearing a sky-blue shirt. He wears black velvet trousers and a short coat. I am sure he thinks he is perfectly dressed for the country. Ah, if he only had a gun to carry on his shoulder!

When he came home, he walked stiff, rigid like a post, hands in pockets up to the front door and *stood there*. Did not knock, gave no sign. In less than a minute the door opened to him. His wife *felt* he was there.

(What a passion one feels for the sun here!)

The friend is a dashing young man in a grey suit, with a cap always worn very much on one side. His cap he does not like to take off. He is the kind of man who sits on the edge of tables or leans against the counter of bars with his thumbs in his waistcoat. He feels a dog. He is sure all the girls are wild about him, and it's true each time he looks at one, she is ready to titter. For all his carelessness, he's close with money. When he and his 'friend' go up to the village for stores, he lounges in the shop, smells things, *suggests* things, but turns his back and whistles when it comes to adding up the bill. He thinks the friend's wife is in love with him.

(When the dog is tied up, it cries pitifully, sobs. The sound, so unrestrained, *pleases* them.)

The wife is small, untidy, with large gold rings in her hair. She wears white canvas shoes and a jacket trimmed with artificial fur. She is the woman who is spending the day at the sea-side. She looks dissatisfied, unhappy. I am sure she is a terrible muddler.

(The dog is really very hysterical.)

They have a little servant maid of about sixteen, with a loose plait of dark streaky hair and silver-rimmed spectacles. She walks in a terribly meek but self-satisfied way, pushing out her stomach. She is meekness *itself*. How she bows her head and walks after her master! It is terrible to see. She wishes to be invisible, to pass unseen. 'Do not look at me!' And she effaces herself. (This must be written very directly.) She it is who holds the baby. When the

others have gone, she rather lords it over the baby, turns up his clothes and exclaims with quite an air.

The baby is at that age when it droops over a shoulder. It is still a boneless baby, blowing bubbles, in a little blue muslin frock. When it cries, it cries as though it were being squeezed. Its feet, in white boots, are like little cakes of dough.

(The dog's enthusiasm is enough to make you want to kick it. When they come out, cold, damp, depressed, there he is leaping, asking when the fun's going to begin. It is sickening.)

A queer bit of psychology: I had to disappear behind the bushes to-day in a hollow. That act made me feel nearer to normal health than I have felt for years. Nobody there; nobody wondered if I was all right, *i.e.* there was nothing to distinguish me, at that moment, from an ordinary human being.

Each little movement of this bird is made so ostentatiously—as if it were trying to show itself off as much as possible. Why?

But to continue with this *alone*-ness—to *follow* it up a little? Could I . . .? It seems to me to depend entirely on health in my case. If I were well and could spend the evenings sitting up writing till about eleven. . . .

To look up through the trees to the far-away heavenly blue.

Now it's getting late afternoon and all sounds are softer, deeper. The sough of the wind in the branches is more *thoughtful*.

This—this is as great happiness as I shall ever know. It is greater happiness than I had ever thought possible. But why is it incompatible with ——? Only because of your weakness. There is nothing to prevent you living like this. In fact, don't you yet know that the more active and apart you make your own life, the more content the other is? What he finds intolerable is the lack of privacy. *But so do you*. It makes him feel as though he were living under a vacuum jar. So it does you. You hang on thinking to please him until he burns for you to be gone.

How badly, how stupidly you manage your life! Don't you realise that both of you have had enough contact to last for years, that the only way for each of you to be renewed and refreshed is

for you to go apart. Nor necessarily to *tear* apart, but to go apart as wisely as possible. You are the most stupid woman I have ever met. You never will see that it all rests with you. If you do not take the initiative, nothing will be done. The reason why you find it so hard to write is because you are learning nothing. I mean of the things that count—like the sight of this tree with its purple cones against the blue. How can I put it, that there is gum on the cones? 'Gemmed?' *No*. 'Beaded?' *No*. 'They are like crystals.' Must I? I am afraid so. . . .

Mountain Hotel.

Behind the hotel—*à deux pas de l'hôtel*, as the prospectus said—there is an immense stretch of gently rising turf dotted with clumps of pine and fir trees. Beyond was the forest, threaded with green paths and hoarse, quick-tumbling little streams. Dark blue mountains, streaked with white, rose above the forest, and higher still there was another range, bright silver, floating across the still, transparent sky.

What could be more pleasant, after the long terribly cold winter, than to sit outside on a fine spring afternoon and to talk, slowly, softly, at one's ease? Nothing has happened, and yet there seems so much to say. In the winter one can go for weeks without saying a word more than is necessary. But now, in the warmth and light, there is such a longing to talk that it is hard to wait for one's turn. . . . It was hot in the sun. Auntie Marie had a newspaper over her head; Auntie Rose a handkerchief. But little Anna's father, whose hair was thick like fur, refused to cover himself. They sat, the three of them, in a row on canvas chairs outside the back door of the hotel and little Anna danced, now before them, now behind, now from side to side, like a gnat.

Little Anna and her father had come up from the valley by the funicular to spend the day with the Aunties who owned this immense, airy hotel with its wide windows and wooden balconies and glassed-in verandah lounge. What! all this was owned by these two insignificant little grey-haired creatures in their black stuff dresses. They themselves seemed to realise how dreadfully

inappropriate it was, and hurriedly explained in almost a horrified whisper that it had been left to them. And as they could never sell it or let it they tried to make a living out of it. But very, very few people came. It was too quiet for young people. There was no dancing, no golf, nothing on earth to do but to stare at the view. And, thank Heaven, they hadn't come to that yet! And it was too quiet for old people. There was no chemist, no doctor within call. As for the view, when one did stare at it one felt inclined to whimper—the mountains looked so cruelly unsympathetic. . . .

I seem to have lost all power of writing. I can think, in a vague way, and it all seems more or less real and worth doing. But I can't get any further. I can't write it down. Sometimes I think my brain is going. But no! I know the real reason. It's because I am still suffering from a kind of nervous prostration caused by my life in Paris. For instance, those interviews with the dentist. If anyone else—anyone with imagination—had realised what I suffered, they would have known I was really at the end of my strength. And then the strain of keeping going, of brushing my clothes, of making the constant, renewed effort, and talking to Brett, coughing. . . . Bogey was perfectly marvellous. But watching him do everything was really nearly as tiring as doing it oneself. And then, on other journeys, look at the care I had taken of me—everything was spared. There was nothing to do but to keep still. This time I felt at the mercy of everything. Tchehov, by the way, felt this disenchantment, exactly. And who would not feel it who lives with a pessimist? To keep another going, is a million times more tiring than to keep oneself going. And then there is always the feeling that all falls on *stony ground*. Nothing is nourished, watched, cherished. He hears. It gives him a vague sense of life, and then it passes away from him as though it had never been, and he . . .

(*June*, 1922.)

At the beginning of July Katherine descended to Sierre, while I remained at Randogne, visiting her at week-ends.

The following fragments represent her abortive attempts to work during this period. She also tried to continue the title story of The Doves' Nest, *which she had begun in January. But the experience in Paris had exhausted her.*

Spring in Tyrrell Street.

On a fine spring morning, one of those delicious spotless mornings when one feels that celestial housemaids have been joyfully busy all through the night, Mrs. Quill locked the back door, the pantry window, and the front door, and set off for the railway station.

'Good-bay, wee house!' said she, as she shut the gate, and she felt the house heard and loved her. It was not quite empty. In her bedroom, in his cradle, Chi-chi lay sleeping his morning sleep. But the blind was down and he was so beautifully trained. She counted on him not waking up until she was back.

At that hour, all the little houses in Tyrrell Street basked in the radiant light; all the canaries, in *their* little houses hanging from the verandah poles, sang their shrillest. It was difficult to understand how the infants in perambulators who shared the verandahs with the canaries slept through the din. But they apparently did; no sound came from them. Up and down spanked the important-looking bright yellow butcher's cart, and in and out of the back gates went the baker's boy with his basket clamped to his back like a big shell.

It had rained in the night. There were still puddles—broken stars—on the road. But the pavement was beautifully dry. What a pleasure it was to walk on the nice clean pavement!

The Sheridans.

It was late afternoon when Mrs. Sheridan, after having paid Heaven knows how many calls, turned towards home.

'Thank Heaven, that's all over!' she sighed, as she clicked the last gate to, and stuffed her little Chinese card-case into her handbag.

But it was not all over. Although she hadn't the faintest desire

to remember her afternoon, her mind, evidently, was determined she should not forget it. And so she walked along seeing herself knocking at doors, crossing dim halls into large pale drawing-rooms, hearing herself saying, 'No, she would not have any tea, thank you. Yes, they were all splendidly well. No, they had not seen it yet. The children were going to-night. Yes, fancy, he had arrived. Young and good-looking, too! Quite an asset! Oh dear no! She was determined not to allow any of her girls to marry. It was quite unnecessary now-a-days, and such a risk!' And so on and so on.

'What nonsense calling is! What a waste of time! I have never met a single woman yet who even pretended to like it. Why keep it up then? Why not decide once and for all? Mock-orange . . .' And Mrs. Sheridan woke out of her dream to find herself standing under a beautiful mock-orange bush that grew against the white palings of old Mr. Phillips' garden. The little sponge-like fruits—flowers? which were they?—shone burning-bright in the late afternoon sun. 'They are like little worlds,' she thought, peering up through the large crumpled leaves; and she put out her hand and touched one gently. 'The feel of things is so strange, so different, one never seems to know a thing until one has felt it—at least that is true of flowers. Roses for instance,—who can smell a rose without kissing it? And pansies, little darlings they are! People don't pay half enough attention to pansies.' Now her glove was all brushed with yellow. But it didn't matter. She was glad, even. 'I wish you grew in my garden,' she said regretfully to the mock-orange bush, and she went on, thinking, 'I wonder why I love flowers so much. None of the children inherit it from me. Laura perhaps. But even then it's not the same. She's too young to feel as I do. I love flowers more than people, except my own family, of course. Take this afternoon, for instance. The only thing that really remains is that mock-orange.'

(But this is not expanded enough, or rich enough. I think still a description of the hour and place should come first. And then the light should fall on the figure of Mrs. S. on her way home. Really I can allow myself to write a great deal—to describe it all

—the baths, the avenue, the people in the gardens, the Chinaman under the tree in May Street. But in that case she won't be conscious of these things. That's bad. They must be seen and felt by her as she wanders home. . . . That sense of flowing in and out of houses—going and returning—like the tide. To go and not to return. How terrible! The father in his dressing-room—the familiar talk. His using her hair-brush—his passion for things that *wear well*. The children sitting round the table—the light outside, the silver. Her feeling as she sees them all gathered together—her longing for them always to be *there*. Yes, I'm getting nearer all this. I now remember S.W. and see that it must be written with love—real love. All the same, the difficulty is to get it all within *focus*—to introduce that young doctor and bring him continually nearer and nearer until finally he is part of the Sheridan family, until finally he has taken away Meg . . . that is by no means easy. . . .)

Now her white glove was all brushed with yellow. But it did not matter. She was glad, even. 'Why don't you grow in my garden?' she said regretfully to the mock-orange bush. And she went on thinking. 'I wonder why I love flowers so much. I love them more than people—except my own family, of course. But take this afternoon, for instance. The only thing that really remains is that mock-orange. I mean, when I was standing under that bush, it was the only moment when I felt in touch with something. These things are very difficult to explain. But the fact remains I never feel the need of anybody—apart from Claude and the children. If the rest of the world was swept away tomorrow.'

Return again! Come. It was an agony to Mr. Sheridan to be late, or to know that others were late. It had always been so. Talking with his wife in the garden—the stillness, the lightness, the steps on the gravel—the dark trees, the flowers, the night-scented stocks—what happiness it was to walk with him here! What he said did not really matter so very much. But she felt she had him to herself in a way that no other occasion granted her. She felt *his ease*, and although he never looked at what she pointed out to him it did not matter. His 'very nice, dear!' was enough.

He was always planning, always staring towards a future. . . . 'I should like later on.' But she—she did not care in the least; the present was all she loved and dwelt in. . . .

(I have been thinking over this story this morning. I suppose I know as much about it now as I shall know. So it seems. And if just the miracle happened I would walk into it and make it mine. Even to write that, brings it all nearer. It's very strange, but the mere act of *writing anything* is a help. It seems to speed one on one's way . . . But my feet are so cold.)

The excitement began first thing that morning by their father suddenly deciding that, after all, they could have champagne. What! Impossible! Mother was joking!

A fierce discussion had raged on this subject ever since the invitations were sent out, Father pooh-poohing—and refusing to listen, and Mother, as usual siding with him when she was with him: ('Of course, darling: I quite agree') and siding with them when she was with them: ('Most unreasonable, I more than see the point'). So that by this time they had definitely given up hope of champagne, and had focussed all their attention on the hock cup instead. And now, for no reason whatever, with nobody saying a word to him—so like Father!—he had given in.

'It was just after Zaidee had brought in our morning tea. He was lying on his back, you know, staring at the ceiling. And suddenly he said: "I don't want the children to think I am a wet blanket about this dance affair. If it's going to make all that difference to them; if it's a question of the thing going with a swing or not going with a swing, then I'm inclined to let them have champagne. I'll call in and order it on my way to the Bank." '

'My dear! What did you say?'

'What could I say? I was overcome. I said: "That's very generous of you, Daddy dear", and I placed the entire plate of cut bread and butter on his chest. As a kind of sacrifice to the darling. I felt he deserved it, and he does so love those thin shaves of bread and butter.'

'Can't you see the plate,' cried Laurie, 'gently rising and falling on his pyjama jacket?'

They began to laugh, but it really was most thrilling. . . . Champagne did make all the difference—didn't it? Just the feeling it was there gave such a different . . . Oh, absolutely!

July 4 This is a damning little notebook, quite in the old style. How I am committed!

To-day is Tuesday. Since leaving M[ontana], I have written about a page. The rest of the time I seem to have slept! This of course started all the Old Fears, that I would never write again, that I was getting sleeping sickness and so on. But this morning I nearly kicked off and this evening I feel perhaps a time of convalescence was absolutely necessary. The mind was choked with the wrack of all those dreadful tides. I wrote to Kot to-day. It seems to bring things nearer.

It's only now I am beginning to see again and to recognise again the beauty of the world. Take the swallows to-day—their flitter flutter—their delicate forked tails—the transparent wings that are like the fins of fishes. The little dark head and the breast golden in the light. Then the beauty of the garden and the beauty of raked paths. . . . Then, silence.

I should like to write the Canary story to-morrow. So many ideas come and go. If there is time I shall write them all—if this uninterrupted time continues. The story about this hotel would be wonderful if I could do it.[1]

I wage eternally a war of small deceits. Tear this book up! Tear it up, now! But now I am pretending to be taking notes on a book I have already read and despise. . . .

What dreadful, awful rot!

If there is a book to be read, no matter how bad that book is, I will read it. Was it always so with me? I don't remember. Looking back, I imagine I was always writing. Twaddle it was, too. But better far write twaddle or anything, anything, than nothing at all.

Katherine had originally planned to return to Paris on August 20 to

[1]For this unfinished story *Father and the Girls:* see *The Doves' Nest,* which contains also *The Canary.* *The Canary* was finished on July 7. It was the last story Katherine wrote.

continue the Manoukhin treatment. But early in August she suddenly decided to return to London. On August 8 *she wrote me a letter to be handed to me after her death, on August* 14 *she made her will, and went to London on August* 17. *The treatment—the irradiation of the spleen—was continued for a while by a London radiologist named Webster; but her heart was no longer in the attempt at a physical cure. The purely formal entries in her diary which are unprecedented seem to indicate her spiritual preoccupation.*

September 3 Selsfield.

September 4 Tea with Papa.

September 5 O. [Orage.] Tea with Mrs. Richmond.

September 6 Webster. 12 o'clock.

September 7 Tea with Papa and the children.

September 8 Lunch with Edward Garnett.

September 9 The search for the cardigan. Gave Minnie notice.

September 10 Orage 7.30 here.

September 12 Children to tea.

September 14 Lunch with Papa. Saw Marion Ruddick. Lecture at 28 Warwick Gardens.

September 15 Webster at 12. Saw Doctor Sorapure. Wrote Roma Webster.

September 16 Orage 8.30. Kot at 2.

September 17 Lunch with Sydney and Violet. *Odious*. Children to tea.

September 18 Kot at 2.

September 19 Flower Show with Mrs. Richmond. Lunch 1.30 Belgravia Restaurant, Grosvenor Gardens. Vivian Locke Ellis and Sullivan came to dinner. Dull. Cough very troublesome. Saw Webster.

September 20 Lunch with Beresford at 1 p.m. Richard to tea. Sullivan to dinner.

September 21 Charlotte to tea. 146 Harley Street 8 p.m. Kot in afternoon.

September 22 Lilian. Lunch with Anne. Richard to tea.

September 23 Kot 3 p.m.

September 24 Charlotte to tea.

On October 3, Katherine went to Paris, ostensibly to continue the treatment under Manoukhin. She said she was dissatisfied with the experimental treatment in London. 'I would endure any hotel, any Paris surroundings, for the sake of Manoukhin himself,' she wrote to me on September 27. Nevertheless, I felt that she was pretending, and that her real intention, though perhaps only half-formed, was to get into touch with Gurdjieff. And on October 16 she went to Le Prieuré at Fontainebleau, and did not return.

September My first conversation with Orage took place on August 30, 1922.

On that occasion I began by telling him how dissatisfied I was with the idea that Life must be a lesser thing than we were capable of 'imagining' it to be. I had the feeling that the same thing happened to nearly everybody whom I knew and whom I did not know. No sooner was their youth, with the little force and impetus characteristic of youth, done, than they stopped growing. At the very moment that one felt that now was the time to gather oneself together, to use one's whole strength, to take control, to be an adult, in fact, they seemed content to swop the darling wish of their hearts for innumerable little wishes. Or the image that suggested itself to me was that of a river flowing away in countless little trickles over a dark swamp.

They deceived themselves, of course. They called this trickling away—greater tolerance—wider interests—a sense of proportion—so that work did not rule out the possibility of 'life'. Or they

called it an escape from all this mind-probing and self-consciousness—a simpler and therefore a better way of life. But sooner or later, in literature at any rate, there sounded an undertone of deep regret. There was an uneasiness, a sense of frustration. One heard, one thought one heard, the cry that began to echo in one's own being: 'I have missed it. I have given up. This is not what I want. If this is all, then Life is not worth living.'

But I *know* it is not all. How does one know that? Let me take the case of K.M. She has led, ever since she can remember, a very typically false life. Yet, through it all, there have been moments, instants, gleams, when she has felt the possibility of something quite other.

Love-birds at 47*b*: *Male* and female. Male, green underbody, wings mole, tipped with yellow, broad at base, gradually growing smaller until the head feathers, as close as can be. Yellow faces: a touch of pale-blue on the chops and on the top of the beak. On the male exquisite black spots, points of jet under the beak. Tail of male bird blue.

Female yellow with overbody of pale green in delicate pencil lines. The bird is yellow, but a green-yellow. Male bird burrows in its back, finds. . . .

September 30 'Do you know what individuality is?'

'No.'

'Consciousness of will. To be conscious that you have a will and can act.'

Yes, it is. It's a glorious saying.

October 3 Arrived Paris. Took rooms in Select Hotel, Place de la Sorbonne, for ten francs a day per person. What feeling? Very little. The room is like the room where one could work—or so it feels. I have been a perfect torment to L.M. who is pale with dark eyes. I suspect my reactions so much that I hardly dare say what I think of the room and so on. Do I know? Not really. Not more than she.

I have thought of M. to-day. We are no longer together. Am I in the right way, though? No, not yet. Only looking on—telling others. I am not in body and soul. I feel a bit of a sham. . . . And so I am. One of the K.M.s is so sorry. But of course she is. She has to die. *Don't* feed her.

October *Important*. When we can begin to take our failures non-seriously, it means we are ceasing to be afraid of them. It is of immense importance to learn to *laugh at ourselves*. What Shestov calls 'a touch of easy familiarity and derision' has its value.

What will happen to Anatole France and his charming smile? Doesn't it disguise a lack of feeling, like M.'s weariness?

Life should be like a steady, visible light.

What remains of all those years together? It is difficult to say. If they were so important, how could they have come to nothing. Who *gave up* and *why*?

Haven't I been saying, all along, that the fault lies in trying to cure the body and paying no heed whatever to the sick psyche? Gurdjieff claims to do just what I have always dreamed might be done.

The sound of a street pipe, hundreds and hundreds of years old.

October 14 Orage goes to Paris.

The following entry was torn out of her journal to be sent to me. But Katherine changed her mind. I found it among her papers with this superscription, 'These pages from my journal. Don't let them distress you. The story has *a happy ending, really and truly.'*

October 14 I have been thinking this morning until it seems I may get things straightened out if I try to write . . . where I am.

Ever since I came to Paris I have been as ill as ever. In fact, yesterday I thought I was dying. It is not imagination. My heart is so exhausted and so tied up that I can only walk to the taxi and back. I get up at midi and go to bed at 5.30. I try to 'work' by fits and starts, but the time has gone by. I cannot work. Ever since

April I have done practically nothing. But why? Because, although Manoukhin's treatment improved my blood and made me look well and did have a good effect on my lungs, it made my heart not one scrap better, and I only won that improvement by living the life of a corpse in the Victoria Palace Hotel.

My spirit is nearly dead. My spring of life is so starved that it's just not dry. Nearly all my improved health is pretence—acting. What does it amount to? Can I walk? Only creep. Can I do anything with my hands or body? Nothing at all. I am an absolutely hopeless invalid. What is my life? It is the existence of a parasite. And five years have passed now, and I am in straiter bonds than ever.

Ah, I feel a little calmer already to be writing. Thank God for writing! I am so terrified of what I am going to do. All the voices out of the 'Past' say 'Don't do it'. Bogey says 'M. is a scientist. He does his part. It's up to you to do yours.' But that is no good at all. I can no more cure my psyche than my body. Less it seems to me. Isn't Bogey himself, perfectly fresh and well, utterly depressed by boils on his neck? Think of five years' imprisonment. Someone has got to help me to get out. If that is a confession of weakness—it is. But it's only lack of imagination that calls it so. And who is going to help me? Remember Switzerland: 'I am helpless.' Of course, he is. One prisoner cannot help another. Do I believe in medicine alone? No, never. In science alone? No, never. It seems to me childish and ridiculous to suppose one can be cured like a cow *if one is not a cow*. And here, all these years, I have been looking for someone who agreed with me. I have heard of Gurdjieff who seems not only to agree but to know infinitely more about it. Why hesitate?

Fear. Fear of what? Doesn't it come down to fear of losing Bogey? I believe it does. But, good Heavens! Face things. What have you of him now? What is your relationship? He talks to you —sometimes—and then goes off. He thinks of you tenderly. He dreams of a life with you *some day* when the miracle has happened. You are important to him as a dream. Not as a living reality. For you are not one. What do you share? Almost nothing. Yet there

is a deep, sweet, tender flooding of feeling in my heart which is love for him and longing for him. But what is the good of it as things stand? Life together, with me ill, is simply torture with happy moments. But it's not life. I have tried through my illness (with one or two disastrous exceptions) to prevent him facing wholly what was happening. I ought to have tried to get him to face them. But I couldn't. The result is he doesn't know me. He only knows Wig-who-is-going-to-be-better-some-day. No. You do know that Bogey and you are only a kind of dream of what might be. And that might-be never never can be true unless you are well. And you won't get well by 'imagining' or 'waiting' or trying to bring off that miracle yourself.

Therefore if the Grand Lama of Thibet promised to help you —how can you hesitate? Risk! Risk anything! Care no more for the opinions of others, for those voices. Do the hardest thing on earth for you. Act for yourself. Face the truth.

True, Tchehov didn't. Yes, but Tchehov died. And let us be honest. How much do we know of Tchehov from his letters? Was that all? Of course not. Don't you suppose he had a whole longing life of which there is hardly a word? Then read the final letters. He has given up hope. If you de-sentimentalize those final letters they are terrible. There is no more Tchehov. Illness has swallowed him.

But perhaps to people who are not ill, all this is nonsense. They have never travelled this road. How can they see where I am? All the more reason to go boldly forward alone. Life is not simple. In spite of all we say about the mystery of Life, when we get down to it we want to treat it as though it were a child's tale. . . .

Now, Katherine, what do you mean by health? And what do you want it for?

Answer: By health I mean the power to live a full, adult, living, breathing life in close contact with what I love—the earth and the wonders thereof—the sea—the sun. All that we mean when we speak of the external world. I want to enter into it, to be part of it, to live in it, to learn from it, to lose all that is superficial and acquired in me and to become a conscious, direct human being.

I want, by understanding myself, to understand others. I want to be all that I am capable of becoming so that I may be (and here I have stopped and waited and waited and it's no good—there's only one phrase that will do) *a child of the sun*. About helping others, about carrying a light and so on, it seems false to say a single word. Let it be at that. *A child of the sun*.

Then I want to *work*. At what? I want so to live that I work with my hands and my feeling and my brain. I want a garden, a small house, grass, animals, books, pictures, music. And out of this, the expression of this, I want to be writing. (Though I may write about cabmen. That's no matter.)

But warm, eager, living life—to be rooted in life—to learn, to desire to know, to feel, to think, to act. That is what I want. And nothing less. That is what I must try for.

I wrote this for myself. I shall now risk sending it to Bogey. He may do with it what he likes. He must see how much I love him.

And when I say 'I fear'—don't let it disturb you, dearest heart. We all fear when we are in waiting-rooms. Yet we must pass beyond them, and if the other can keep calm, it is all the help we can give each other.

Suppose, if this worries you, you show it to Dunning? I trust Dunning in spite of my thinking he did not really solve your problem. Let him see that, too. He will understand.

And this all sounds very strenuous and serious. But now that I have wrestled with it, it's no longer so. I feel happy—deep down. May you be happy too.

I'm going to Fontainebleau on Monday and I'll be *back here* Tuesday night or Wednesday morning. *All is well*.

Doctor Young, the London man who has joined Gurdjieff, came to see me to-day and told me about the life there. It sounds wonderfully good and simple and what one needs.

October *The Luxembourg Gardens*. A very small railway train came along, with a wooden whistle. First it stopped, blew the whistle, and then moved slowly forward with a wonderfully

expressive motion of the right arm. People mattered not at all. It went through them, past them; skirted them. Then down it fell, full length. But two gentlemen picked it up, patted its behind, and in a minute it whistled (rather longer than usual) and started off again. . . .

A little bird-like mother with a baby in her arm, and tugging at one hand a minute little girl in a coat made out of a pleated skirt, and a pink bow—it looked like pink flannel—on her clubbed hair. A very rich child in a white beaver hat passed and fell quite in love with the pink flannel bow. When its nurse was not looking it hung back and walked beside its little poor sister, looking at her wonderingly and very carefully *keeping step*.

A little person in a pink hat passed, very carefully dragging a minute doll's pram. It was *so* minute she had to drag it on a thread of cotton. Naturally, once she stopped looking and her hand gave a jerk, down fell the pram. For about two minutes she dragged it along on its side. Then she discovered the accident, rushed back, set it up, and looked round very angrily in all directions: *certain* some enemy had knocked it over on purpose. Her little dark direct gaze was quite frightening. Did she see some one?

And then suddenly the wind lifts, and all the bare leaves fly forward so gladly, so eagerly, as if they were thankful it is not their turn yet to . . .

October 15 Nietzsche's Birthday. Sat in the Luxembourg Gardens. Cold, wretchedly unhappy. Horrid people at lunch, everything horrid, from *Anfang bis zum Ende*.

October 17 *Laublätter*. The Four Fountains. The Red Tobacco Plant. English dog. The funeral procession. Actions and Reactions. The silky husk, like the inside of the paw of a cat. 'Darling.'

Fire is sunlight and returns to the sun again in an unending cycle. . . . He [Gurdjieff] looks exactly like a desert chief. I kept thinking of Doughty's *Arabia*.

To be wildly enthusiastic, or deadly serious—both are wrong. Both pass. One must keep ever present a sense of humour. It depends entirely on yourself how much you see or hear or under-

stand. But the sense of humour I have found true of every single occasion of my life. Now perhaps you understand what 'indifferent' means. It is to learn not to mind, and not to show your mind.

October 18 In the autumn garden leaves falling. Little footfalls, like gentle whispering. They fly, spin, twirl, shake.

November.

The following list of words and phrases, for which she sought the Russian equivalent, is eloquent of the discomforts which Katherine deliberately endured at the Gurdjieff Institute at Fontainebleau.

I am cold.
Bring paper to light a fire.
Paper.
Cinders.
Wood.
Matches.
Flame.
Smoke.
Strong.
Strength.
Light a fire.
No more fire.
Because there is no more fire.
White paper.
Black paper.
What is the time?
It is late.
It is still early.
Good.
I would like to speak Russian with you.

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Katherine Mansfield died at 10.30 *p.m. on January* 9, 1923, *on the evening of the day on which I went, at her request, to visit her. An account of her conversation with me on that day will be found at the end of her* Letters to J. M. M.

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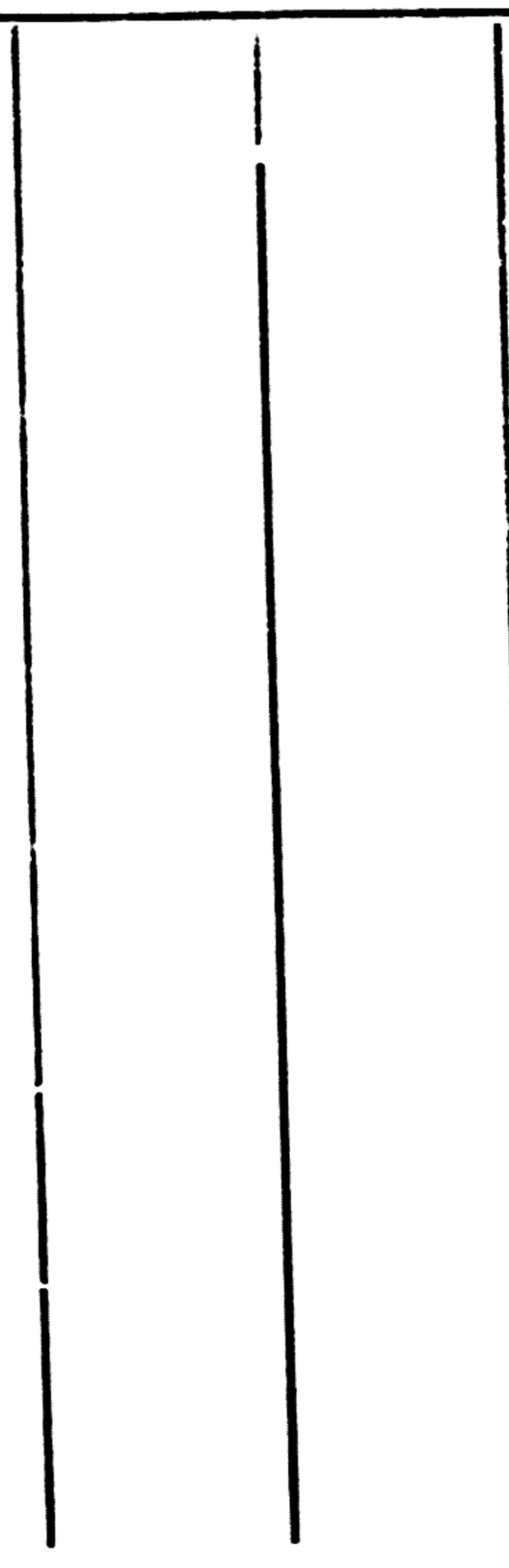
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